



Ask SCORE for Business Advice

"Ask SCORE" Column
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Ghost Tours Prove Successful, Dec. 10, 2009 by Tina Dettman-Bielefeldt

When Timothy Freiss visited SCORE a few years ago, he wanted to know if his business idea had a ghost's chance of success. He already owned Tim's Touch-up and Refinishing, but his new plan was completely different. Would Green Bay be a good location for a ghost tour?

Having met with Robert Jahnke, a SCORE counselor, in the past, Freiss sought Jahnke's input. Freiss explained, "I wanted to know how to get started. Where do I find stories? How do I organize the information? Is it possible?"

Jahnke was intrigued by the idea, and when on a business trip, picked up brochures and information on similar tours. He suggested that Freiss visit the Green Bay Convention and Visitor's Bureau for their feedback, and start working on a business plan. For two and a half years, Freiss did just that.

"I talked to historians and found out that there were quite a few haunted places in the area," Freiss noted. "I dug into each story, looked into information about the buildings and picked out the best stories."

He was fascinated by many of the tales. One of his favorites involved the current Captains Walk property at 345 S. Adams Street in downtown Green Bay. It is a colorful story revolving around Helen Moreau, the youngest of six daughters of Elijah Moreau, a famous historical figure who helped get Abraham Lincoln elected. After inheriting the family home, Moreau lost it because women weren't allowed to work and she had no income. The property then became the Women's Rights Society headquarters, and after Moreau's death, rumored to be her residence, as well.

"She lost the home in life, but now she has it back. Helen is often seen around and is known for playing tricks like turning on water faucets," Freiss said.

This is one of the tales told in detail on his tours. Scheduled for Fridays at 6 p.m. whenever he has eight or more people registered, the tour begins at Regina's Seven Pillars, 1138 West Mason Street, moves on to Somewhere in Time Antiques, 159 N. Broadway St., then to Captains Walk, the downtown YMCA, and finally, Tryst Night Club, the former Confetti's, 217 E. Walnut St

At each location, Freiss recounts stories of murders, shadowy figures, and ghost sightings. The tours may be booked for private gatherings. So far, the business has been going well and reviews have been excellent.

“I was pretty lucky,” Freiss said. “I already had income from my other business and could take time developing the ghost tour. Sometimes I struggle, but overall, I’ve been happy with my accomplishments.”

Freiss is looking at expanding the business to include tours in De Pere and Howard. If you’ve met any ghosts in those areas, Freiss invites you to post the details on his FaceBook page, Green Bay Ghost Tours.

If you’d like to learn more, contact the Green Bay Chapter of SCORE. Visit www.greenbayscore.org or call Cindy Gokey at 920-496-8930 for information.

[Tina Dettman-Bielefeldt](#) is co-owner of DB Commercial Real Estate in Green Bay and Assistant District Director for SCORE, Wisconsin.