

Haunted events

By Brandon Sarzynski
Media Critic
bss177@psu.edu

Well it's that time of year again. Halloween is upon us, and since we are too old for "trick or treating," we have to find something else to get into the spirit of the season. Yeah, it'll be a lot of fun handing out candy with Mom this year... or you could just check out one of the haunted attractions in the area and bring your significant other along, even if it is Mom. We went to four haunted attractions in the area to see which one was best for spending the little cash you have. (Who knows maybe Mom will lend you \$20)

Field Of Screams
www.fieldofscreams.com
(717) 285-7748
Location: Mountville PA, Just South of Lancaster
Price to see it all: \$22

The Den of Darkness is definitely worth a look. It managed to scare the living crap out of my female counterpart; she won't go back in there ever again. I can't lie; I jumped a few times as well. Some of the effects inside were well worth the admission. Let's just leave it at 15 foot giants and live autopsies.

The Nightmare Asylum in 3-D attraction was pretty much standard fare for 3-D attractions. There was some creativity flowing at times, such as where they started splitting up groups and sending them through different doors. When you came out on the other side, people were popping out of random doors left and right. It was like an episode of Scooby Doo, complete with killer clown.

The Haunted Hayride had some standard effects but nothing that really made us jump more than once or twice. This would be a great hayride for a date, and the speakers are attached to the wagon so you get to hear all of the actors.

Our favorite part of Field of Screams was the Scare Booths. What is a Scare Booth you ask? All I can say is that, you get your chance to make others scream... and you can do it over and over again, and it only costs \$.50, so inquire at the gift shop. Male score 2.5 out of 5
Female score: 2.5 out of 5
Overall score: 2.5 out of 5



The Haunted Mill
www.thehauntedmill.com
(717) 225-4811
Location: Spring Grove PA, West of York
Price to see it all: \$25

This attraction was a bit low budget, but man did that work in their favor. Whenever you stopped paying attention there would always be someone behind you with a chainsaw. From the minute we hit the ticket booth up until the minute we left, we learned really quick to watch our backs.

The Terror Trail and the Creepy Corn Walk were the best attractions to be found here. Imagine walking by yourself through the woods at night, or through a cornfield. Yeah, you get the point. The idea alone is creepy, not to mention the chainsaws. Both walks are at least 15 to 30 minutes each, depending how fast you run. Granted, the costumes aren't the best, but when you have no idea where the person is hiding, you get a nice jump in the heart.

The Hayride here played out as a 15 minute back woods hillbilly joke. It wasn't really all that great until the end. The best part doesn't happen until after you unload from the wagon. All I can say without ruining it is that they had us in stitches for about five minutes.

When it comes down to the

Haunted Mill and the Dark Zone, I wasn't really all that impressed. My female counterpart begs to differ, but I didn't like it. The low budget killed it, and props with little or no animation hurt it as well. They would have been more impressive without them. More actors would have been nice, but because it was so early in the season they weren't yet at full staff. The best part out of the two attractions was the end of the Dark Zone. Two young girls dressed in black robes jumped out and refused to let us pass. They made my female accompaniment think that she would have to continue through alone. Needless to say, that scared the crap out of her. Overall a really great place to take a date...if you don't mind your arms getting bloody from his/her grip.

Female score: 4 out of 5
Male Score: 3 out of 5
Overall Score: 3.5 out of 5



Jason's Woods
www.jasonswoods.com
(717) 872-5768
Location: Lancaster PA
Price to see it all: \$25

Ok, what can I say about Jason's Woods? Hold on, I've got it! PRODUCTION VALUE! Yes my friends, extremely high production value.

This was by far the best hayride. Granted, none of the actual "hayrides" scared us, but this one had the best effects hands down. Giant Demons, Creepy Castles, alien encounters and giant balls of fire everywhere. This hayride was so cool we went on it twice.

The 3-D Scary Tales was one of the most creative 3-D attractions we went through. Based off of nursery rhymes and fairytales it was just a really neat experience. I am just going to offer a word

of advice to you SAFETY = STUPIDITY, you'll find out what I mean when you go through it. The Barn Of Terror was pretty good. Nothing really scared me inside, but then again this was the third place we had visited and I was getting used to the stumbling around in the dark mixed with random horror characters. My counter part jumped quite a few times, but not the scariest. Once again very high production value.

Overall, this is a very cool attraction to see. I enjoyed the effects and detail in the costumes, the animatronics were great, and they were the only place to use fireballs. How awesome is that? Female score: 3.5 out of 5
Male score 4 out of 5
Overall 3.75 out of 5



House Of Terror
www.halloweenpark.com
(717)266-8626
Location: Strinestown PA, about halfway between Harrisburg and York
Price to see it all: \$20

What can I say? This one blew us away. Hands down the best! We originally thought this place would be the worst of all. Their advertising is pretty bad and so we expected the same of the park. Boy, were we wrong. Rule number one: don't judge a book by its cover. Rule number two: forget everything you know from other places. Heck, this place doesn't even have a hayride. Not to mention everything has a backstory which they manage to follow the whole way through.

The House Of Doom amazed us. Imagine, if you will, being handed a candle, and walking into a room where the door closes behind you: There are no visible doors,



Photo courtesy of Field of Screams

At the Field of Screams you may run into this scary chainsaw character who is bound to make you scream!

and to get to the next room you have to solve a puzzle. You almost work into a panic trying to get out. There are only four rooms, but trust us four rooms are enough. There are no actors inside but there are a lot of things to make you jump. I would have to say this was the most creative and well-executed attraction I've ever seen. The only two downfalls are that if someone moves a clue to some place it does not belong, you may not know what to do next, and if the person in front of you can't figure out the clue in the next room, you have to wait and may not realize that you have already solved the room.

The House Of Terror was amazing; just the right amount of everything. Actors that you had to interact with in order to continue on, dark pathways that built so much suspense that you became ready to jump at anything, and just the right amount of special effects. This was damn near perfect.

After finishing the house you head straight into the Terror Visions in 3-D. This is the first 3-D attraction that made me really jumpy. Entirely clown themed, the rooms felt like something out of a

neon circus. Clowns pop out from everywhere. Maximizing all of their actors through passageways behind the walls, the same actor could make you jump three or four times. You never knew where somebody would pop out next. Put it this way, the girl in front of us peed her pants. Literally.

Finally after exiting the 3-D portion, you head to the Island Of Terror. All I need to say is Three Mile Island-inspired zombie invasion. Not only that, but there are actors that are your allies. Yeah, actors who are trying to help you escape the island. How cool is that? The island local that helps you in the beginning was by far the best acting I've seen at any of the places we went to.

Be sure to check out the side attractions. The coffin simulator and the elevator were both highly enjoyable.

Overall, this is the best in the area. Creative, plot driven, and overall scariest experience.

Female score: 6 out of 5

Male score: 5 out of 5

Overall score: 5.5 out of 5



Step up to the challenge
and cash in on your business plan.

College Venture
Challenge

CENTRAL PA
Venture
Challenge
it's a business plan competition

2006 \$15,000 in cash prizes will be awarded
for more information visit
www.harrisburgregionalchamber.org

PRESENTED BY:

BUSINESS JOURNAL

SUPPORTED BY:



ACADEMIC SPONSORS:

