

HAUNTED HOUSES BRING SCARES TO LOCALS

Children of the (October) night are emerging, opening their haunted house attraction doors. We sent our staff to find the scariest haunts in the Metroplex.

HANGMAN'S HOUSE OF HORRORS

Hangman's reveals variety of scares

By Ashley Wood
south news editor

Reopened in a different location, Hangman's House of Horrors shows it can terrify and frighten in a new home.

The setup at 4400 Blue Mound Road off Interstate 820 in northwest Fort Worth includes a 3-D Wonderland House, Outbreak zombie building and the main terror attraction.

Not meant to be a fright, Wonderland House is more family-friendly with beautiful colors and imagination put into the rooms. The queen will make visitors earn their way out of her lair, so visitors beware.

The Outbreak is a quarantine area of zombies. Although it is creepy, the terrifying factor isn't a 10. Makeup and wardrobe do make these zombies unique from most other zombie-haunted attractions.

The main attraction takes

approximately 25 minutes to navigate and is filled with chilling and scary scenes differing from room to room.

The actors are all unscripted and aren't afraid to talk to people passing through their space.

Although no one will touch visitors, they take pride and fun in getting into one's personal space.

Besides the terrifying attractions, Hangman's hosts live music, food and festivities every night it is open.

With tickets ranging from \$25-\$35, depending if one gets a fast pass to the front of the line, visitors will get their money's worth.

The net proceeds from Hangman's will be equally divided between five charities: SafeHaven, Victory Therapy Center, Cenikor, A Wish with Wings and American Cancer Society.

Hangman's volunteer Fred

Patterson, who plays Pa McDagen, said the reason for the move from the original location was the inability to renew the lease and Hangman's producer deciding to retire.

"All of a sudden, it was 'Oh, we got this new place,' so we started moving and then moving more," he said.

The moving process began in March, Patterson said.

"The potential we have here — we're not hindered in a confined space like we were back in the old place," he said. "All these buildings are accessible. Our potential to expand is going to be enormous."

Patterson said while they were setting up the new sights, doors kept slamming shut and whispers could be heard in the buildings, giving this location an extra factor for creepiness.

For more information, visit www.hangmans.com for dates and times.



A Hangman's actor dressed as an old man sweeps through the crowds waiting in line for the houses. He's surly and scary.

FRIGHT FEST

Six Flags offers roller coasters, terrifying prices

By Tabitha Redder
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When October rolls around, the urge to be terrified fills the air, or maybe just the smell of fake blood.

Unfortunately, the scariest things at Six Flags Fright Fest were the heat and the prices.

The haunted houses at Fright Fest are considered "premium attractions," so they require a Fright Pass. Twenty dollars will score theme park attendees unlimited access to the houses, but this is in addition to a steep \$65 general admission fee.

Fright Fest is more of a holistic celebration of scary things rather than one haunted house attraction.

It contains five haunted houses, each with its own short, disturbing backstory on the Six Flags website. Those are probably more gruesome than the houses, even if they seem to be written by a middle-schooler — a demented middle-schooler.

The houses are short, uneventful and lack the scare factor, but the park specializes in thrills, not chills, so don't expect any soiled pants.

"Cadaver Hall Asylum," "Cirkus Berzerkus," "Piggy's Blood Shed" and "Zombie Infestation" are four of the five haunted houses within the park.

They're the typical haunted house format: numerous rooms filled with props and carefully hidden actors jumping out of their hiding spots in an attempt to frighten passing groups.

More than a few of the actors weren't paying attention and were caught doing things like talking to staff, drinking water, etc. Not scary.

An abundance of "event staff" wearing bright yellow shirts inside the houses ruined the mood, sometimes even just loitering about in the walkway of groups passing through.

"Total Darkness" is a more original idea for a house. It's (almost) completely void of light, so groups are given a rope to hold to prevent anyone from getting lost. This attraction was twice as spooky because one must brave not only the dark abyss but also the heat inside the building to get through! Terrifying.

In addition to haunted houses, several concert-type events happen at scheduled times throughout the day with spooky music, zombie performers or the like.

The most entertaining part of one of the mini-concerts, Dead Man's Party Presents: Zombie A-Rock-Allypse, was the technical difficulties and frantic staff. The dead dancers were impressive too, but the sound system with a mind of its own was haunting.

A separate zombie event called "The Awakening," was also going on, but the actual scenario was vague and unclear. However, the zombies looked angry, and their makeup and costumes were impressive.

Basically, Fright Fest is an adequate option if someone is looking for a spooky way to kill a few hours (or a whole day) instead of just an hour or two in a traditional haunted house.

But, if someone is hoping to get legitimately terrified or is pinching pennies, it would be wise to visit one of the actual haunted houses in the Metroplex.

Six Flags Fright Fest runs Friday-Sunday and select Mondays now until Nov. 2.



Six Flags lacked the ability to build up the atmosphere with yellow-shirt event staff inside the houses. Scariest part of the experience was the price of admission.

An actor at Six Flags' Fright Fest leers from behind a door. Fright Fest will continue until Nov. 2.

Photos by Eric Rebosio/The Collegian

CUTTING EDGE

Popular local haunt gives hourlong thriller

By Jamil Oakford
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As October settles in and the leaves begin to change, Lancaster Avenue in Fort Worth is welcoming back its regular haunt.

Cutting Edge is one of the most well-known haunted house attractions in Fort Worth. It's ranked in the top five haunted house attractions in the country and has been featured on both the Discovery Channel and the Travel Channel.

The attraction itself is quite spectacular. Located in an abandoned meat packing plant, the outside feels just a tad creepy, especially as visitors wait in line.

The moment visitors enter, they are engulfed in fog and darkness. It's easy to argue that it's hard to navigate the way through the first third of the attraction, but there are walls on either side.

Notably, Cutting Edge has a few

places where they attempt to slow down the flow of groups. It may seem meticulous, but it's needed. This keeps groups from bumping into other groups and ruining the scares that could come their way.

The maze is probably a great touch as well. Groups are told to wait here as well, and not too long in, the workers hand visitors a glow stick, make them pick from four doors and play a message from Jigsaw (the puzzle maker from the *Saw* franchise).

It's a mad dash through that maze although workers tell people not to run. With Rob Zombie blasting through the speakers, it kind of feels less like *Saw* and more like *House of 1,000 Corpses*.

One area where one should probably try and slow down enough to enjoy is the meat storage room. Very great effects can be found here, not to mention the absolutely terrifying, chainsaw-wielding madman.

The best part too is the silence from the actors. Owner and founder Todd James explained this is a key element to the experience.

"We follow a lot of the great horror characters," he said. "A lot of them don't vocalize. That's kind of what we base things on."

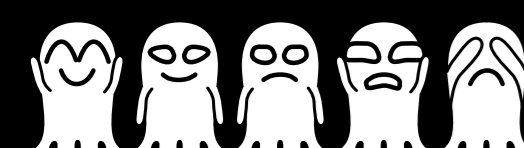
So instead of actors popping out and screaming, visitors are met with chilling silence as an actor approaches, sometimes unbeknownst to that one person in the group.

Cutting Edge is definitely worth the price of admission, where a visitor can spend up to a complete hour inside the building, which earned it a Guinness World Record for longest haunted house attraction.

The haunt is located at 1701 E. Lancaster Ave. in Fort Worth and is open 7 p.m.-midnight Thursday-Saturday and 8-10 p.m. Sunday.



Visitors know they've crossed the finish line once they go through the tunnel of foam. They emerge like swamp monsters victorious and wet for a half-hour.



Besides the complete darkness, the creep-factor of the voiceless actors is unsettling at best. Definitely worth the price of admission.