The most horrifying haunt in the Triangle – Clayton Fear Farm

BY JOSH SHAFFER

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The scariest haunt in the Triangle: Clayton Fear Farm

In a tour of the Triangle’s haunted farms, houses, corn mazes and school buses, Fear Farm still stacks up as creepiest. BY JOSH SHAFFER

Editor’s note: Throughout October, Josh Shaffer is reviewing some of the Triangle’s haunted attractions. This is the third: Clayton Fear Farm.

I could stand the crazy carnival music, shrug off the shrieks coming from the cornfield and endure blackness darker than a goat’s insides, but I knew Fear Farm involved a new level of horror when a worker there sized me up and warned, “Hold onto your glasses.”

Next thing I knew, I was crawling on all fours through a pipe, squeezing hunched over through some sort of tunnel and dropping down what felt like a 20-foot tube into hell’s basement.

At one point, navigating the Slaughter House with fists clenched, I ran smack into a lumbering creature that looked like Frankenstein’s ugly brother but turned out to be my own reflection in a haunted house mirror.

No one in my family would join me at Fear Farm, which I consider the Triangle’s scariest attraction, so I got paired with two high school girls. We quickly got separated in the dark, and when I finally staggered into the light, they exhaled in relief.

“We thought they took you,” they said.

Regular readers of this column may recall I braved Fear Farm seven years ago, describing “chainsaws close enough to smell the gasoline.” It has only grown scarier as I have aged,
and any detail described here falls far short of what’s waiting to jump out in the Clayton moonlight.

In the Triangle’s marketplace of britches-soiling terror, competition runs stiffer than a corpse’s leg. From what I’ve seen, nobody puts on a bad show. But to me, Fear Farm remains the baddest ax murderer in the police lineup.

**THE SCARE SCORE**

Fear Farm rates 4.5 hockey masks out of 5, the highest so far. Having survived other haunted attractions, I’ve developed a tolerance for creatures that scream in your ear. I’ve seen enough clowns to fill a haunted Humvee. Fear Farm still left me shaken. I think the difference is that many of the haunts are made out of actual agricultural buildings. It feels rickety and authentic.

**THE VEXATION VALUE**

A $27 ticket buys a trip through all seven attractions – more expensive than most haunts in the Triangle but not the priciest. That ticket buys a dark walk, a slaughterhouse tour, numerous other Halloween houses plus a 20-minute hayride. Fear Farm gets added props for having a 40-foot wagon, which seats dozens and keeps the long lines moving.

**TOO CREEPY FOR KIDS?**

Absolutely. Fear Farm recommends ages 12 and up. But any 12-year-old better come equipped with a steel spine and a change of pants.

For all near-sighted, bespectacled dads, a glasses strap is recommended.

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Clayton Fear Farm
Location: Fear Farm is at 1620 Loop Road in Clayton, not far from U.S. 70.
Cost: An all-inclusive ticket costs $27 and single ride tickets go for $13. Group rates can apply.
Hours: Opens at 7 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays until Oct. 29, then both Oct. 30 and Halloween. Closing times vary. See www.claytonfearfarm.com.

Josh’s tips: Crowds are thinner on Sundays. Arrive early and take the hayride first. Don’t wear anything that might be easily dropped or caught on stray objects.