

CHSPA / Elitch Gardens FRIGHT NIGHT Contest

A news-feature writing competition open to all member media

The rules

Open to all CHSPA member media, and each medium may enter up to *two* individual stories. Each story must be the work of *one* writer. There is no entry fee, and your school size or publication/media type does not matter. This contest is only open to CHSPA members!

1. Entrants must attend the Oct. 2, 2010 (Saturday) media day for Fright Night at Elitch Gardens. **You must** contact Melissa Quinlan at 303-572-4522 or mquinlan@elitchgardens.com so she can arrange for your free admission and send you final details. Your deadline to contact Melissa at Elitch Gardens is Sept. 29.

2. This is a news-feature writing contest (which may be suitable for inclusion in an October issue of your paper, online or as part of a yearbook spread on fall or Halloween – but it need not be published at all). So take accurate notes, ask questions and generally do a thorough job of reporting. This is not a design or photo contest, and does not include sidebars or other alternative forms of text (we will have other contests for those skills and talents later this school year).

3. After participating in media day, you have *one week* to write and submit your story for this contest. Your word count must be *no longer than 700 words*, and must be saved in Word format (do not paste text into an e-mail). **Be sure to include the writer's name, school media name and school name as part of your Word document.**

4. E-mail your entry as an attachment to chspaboard@gmail.com not later than **10 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9**. Include "Fright Night entry" in your subject line, please.

5. Entries will be forwarded to our out-of-state judge for ranking, and the winners will be notified within two weeks. Winning stories will be posted on CHSPAonline.org, and certificates will be mailed to winners, along with the following *fabulous prizes*:

1st place: Two 2011 tickets to Elitch Gardens, VIP Rapid Rides passes and Meal Deal Coupons

2nd place: Two 2011 tickets to Elitch Gardens, VIP Rapid Rides passes

3rd place: Two 2011 tickets to Elitch Gardens

That's all there is to it. You report. You write. You submit electronically. You get quick feedback. You can compare your story to the winners. You may end up with free admission and more to one of Denver's most popular attractions.

And you may even come up with a news-feature for your school newspaper, yearbook, website or other medium. **Start planning now!**

So what's a news-feature?

It's a story that is tied to a specific news event, but that goes beyond the mere 5Ws and H of solid news reporting.

News leads are often one sentence in length and try to answer as many of those 5 Ws as it can. **News-features** often begin with more creative, expansive leads.

Where news stories tend to be structured in a quote-transition pattern (a direct quote from a newsmaker, followed by a transition graf containing paraphrased material, followed by another quote, which may add information to the preceding graf, or may take readers to a new point, etc.), **news-features** tend to focus more on description and people.

News-features may take us behind the scenes and let us meet individuals who are not traditional newsmakers. **News-features** include carefully chosen direct quotes that reveal personality.

News-features are objective, but also depend on the reporter's point of view. They often possess a lighter tone, emphasizing the unusual, the humorous, or the human interest angles of an event.

For this news-feature, specifically:

1. You are reporting on a special media day, something most of your readers will never get to be part of. On the other hand, the story is NOT about you.

2. It's "Fright Night," for goodness sake, and therefore sort of fun by its very nature.

3. Don't try to include every single exhibit or every single individual you meet. Soon after reporting, sit down with your notes and find the focus of the article. Remember: you have a maximum of 700 words for this story.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

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ELITCH GARDENS HOSTS ANNUAL FRIGHT FEST IN OCTOBER!

It's family by day and fright by night every weekend from Sept. 25 through Oct. 31

WHAT: During the day, the annual **Fright Fest in October** features family-friendly shows and activities to get kids into the Halloween spirit. But once the sun goes down, Elitch Gardens is transformed from a theme park to a scream park as haunted houses come alive and ghost, ghouls and zombies take over.

WHERE: **Elitch Gardens**
2000 Elitch Circle
Denver, Colo.

WHEN: From Sept. 25 through Oct. 31, the park is open Friday 5 p.m – 10 p.m., Saturday noon – 10 p.m and Sunday noon – 9 p.m.

MEDIA DAY: Editors from Denver-area high school newspapers who are interested in covering Fright Fest are invited to a special media tour on Oct. 2 at 6 p.m. Those who are interested in attending can contact Melissa Quinlan at 303-572-4522 or mquinlan@elitchgardens.com.

DETAILS: ***Shows & Attractions***

The Suffering

During the construction of the Trocadero Theater, a book bound in human flesh was discovered buried in the earth underneath. This book of rituals has been opened, and so has a portal into the spirit world. Take part in a séance to awake the dead, then get ready for the consequences. You may have opened a door that ruses to be closed. Any takers? Not recommended for children under eight years of age or the timid.

Bloodlust: The Homecoming

The Homecoming king and queen were the first to disappear, and by the time the last dance was played Elitch High's deranged janitor had enacted his twisted revenge on the entire student body. Take a tour of the school's maintenance room, where no one is safe from one man's madness. May I have this dance? Not recommended for children under eight years of age or the timid.

Bloodlust Monster-less Matinee

The little ones can enjoy our Bloodlust haunted house with the lights on! With no monsters and no darkness, the tour is led by haunted house specialists who can explain all of the tricks used to scare those who enter. Caution: While actors will not be present, some scenes may be graphic.

Wheel of Misfortune

Spin the wheel and get ready to chow down on creepy critters of the wheel's choosing. Winners who finish the fiends will be granted an instant place at the front of the line for the haunted house of their choosing.

Trick-or-Treat Trail

Take a trip down the Trick-or-Treat trail! Bring the kids to enjoy this decorated, fun path around the Scaretoon Studios with stops along the way to collect some tasty Halloween treats. It's a great way for kids to get in on the Halloween fun at Elitch Gardens!

Scare Zones/Park Walkers

Just because you're not in a haunted attraction doesn't mean you're safe. At dusk, the midway becomes infested with living scarecrows, moss monsters, psychos with chainsaws and more.

The Awakening

Music makes zombies come to life in this midway experience that will captivate you! Don't get too close or you may become the next member of this undead dance troop.

Reunion of Souls "Rock the Dead"

Ever wonder what goes on in the Graveyard when the sun goes down? The Zombies of the past come out to Rock!

DJ Goul and the Gang

DJ Ghoul is getting the Monster Mash started with a jump to the left and a step to the right! To get this Graveyard rockin' he's looking for the most disturbing dancers to join his ghoulish gang.

Trick, Treat and Dance-A-Long, Starring Bob the Builder!

Can we dance it? Yes, we can! Get ready for a graveyard groove as this interactive gets the pumpkin patch on its feet with popular dances such as the Twist, the Limbo and Shout!

Scream It Out Challenge!

Always thought you had the loudest kid on the block? Now you can know for sure! Enter your child in the Scream It Out challenge and see if their squeal shatters the decibel reader!

**All shows and attractions are subject to change.*

FUN FACTS: To create the look and feel of Fright Fest, we use 100 bales of straw, seven trick-or-treat trail stations, 1,500 feet of jute netting, five enormous inflatables, two 13-foot ghoulish characters, two haunted houses.

PRICING: Adult ticket: \$40.99; Child ticket (48" and under): \$27.99

SPECIAL

EVENTS: Oct. 16, 1:00 p.m.: Pet Parade Costume Contest

Pets and owners dress up and strut their stuff in this annual costume contest to benefit the Denver Dumb Friends League.

Oct. 24 – Oct. 25: Boo Gardens

It's a kid-friendly celebration with park-wide trick-or-treating each day from 12 p.m. – 6 p.m. Enjoy everything Elitch Gardens and Fright Fest has to offer while safely trick-or-treating.

INFO: For more information, please visit www.elitchgardens.com. Media is welcome to tour the haunted houses and special sneak peek tours can be arranged.

About Elitch Gardens

Elitch Gardens theme park and Island Kingdom water park has been a gathering place for families and children and the entertainment hub of the Denver community for 120 years. The oldest continually-operating theme park west of the Mississippi, Elitch was home to Denver's first zoo, theater, movie house and symphony orchestra. While much has changed over the years, one thing that hasn't changed is the park's commitment to providing treasured memories for families. In 2010, Elitch is celebrating its 120th anniversary with a season-long schedule of events to honor the people of the greater Denver region. www.elitchgardens.com

About PARC Management, LLC

PARC Management, a values-driven company, is the fourth-largest regional theme park group in North America, with 25 parks, including: Darien Lake Resort, Elitch Gardens, Frontier City, Magic Springs & Crystal Falls, Myrtle Waves, SplashTown Houston, Waterworld California, White Water Bay, Wild Waves, nine family entertainment centers, and five NASCAR SpeedParks. PARC Management's mission is to provide safe, wholesome and fun parks where families create treasured memories, and the PARC Family's vision includes strengthening families and communities; mentoring, teaching, and training our Team Members to succeed in life; and serving as the social and entertainment hub of the communities in which we live, work and play.

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