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19 October 2021

LIS 655-01

Program Summary:

Participants will have the opportunity to meet the First in Fright Paranormal Team, learn about some of their experiences and equipment, then join them on a late-night investigation of the Lincoln County Public Library.

Background & Community Analysis:

According to 2019 census records, the population in Lincoln County, North Carolina is 86,111. The median age is 44 years old, and the median annual income is \$71,514. Demographically, the area is 85% Caucasian, 7% Hispanic/Latino, 5% African American, 2% two or more races, and 1% Asian. For this program proposal, the Lincoln County Public Library will partner with the First in Fright Paranormal Team. As Halloween is right around the corner, the timing for this program couldn't be better. Lincoln County is located in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The area is a suburban rural mix. Formed in 1779, it was named for Revolutionary War General, Benjamin Lincoln. This community already has a very active interest in history and the paranormal, and according to locals, many of the historical buildings are supposedly haunted. There is even an annual Ghost Walk where community members post as ghosts of early Lincolnton settlers to tell the story of the Battle of Ramsour's Mill in 1780.

While they are based in Hickory, First in Fright has developed quite a fan base in the Lincolnton. The paranormal team has cultivated a solid relationship with the Lincoln Cultural Center,

conducting frequent investigations there as well as several other local businesses and even the Lincoln County Fire Department. They have co-sponsored multiple events together that raised funds for the Cultural Center. FiFP has been featured in numerous local news articles and the team is very highly regarded in the community. Considering this solid existing foundation, the Lincoln County Public Library will benefit greatly with a similar type of partnership. We are also at that unique time of year where people are *most* interested in the paranormal and supernatural, so the program will appeal to a wide audience. It fits right in with the Halloween theme and will compliment other adult programs like the Pumpkin Carving and Step-by-Step Pumpkin Painting offered at the Lincoln County Public Library. I propose that this program be held outdoors on the library lawn to give participants enough space to socially distance as they participate. Masks are recommended but not required but having the event outdoors will allow for extra space.

Purpose:

The main goal for this program is community engagement: it will allow community members with similar interests in the paranormal to meet one another and share their experiences. Another goal is to educate the public: they will gain knowledge about various types of paranormal investigating equipment, learn how they operate, and participate in hands-on demonstrations. For the FiFP team, paranormal investigating is a very exciting hobby. They are always eager to share and offer advice to anyone interested in starting up for themselves. Finally, members will get to experience and participate in an actual investigation of the library with the team, so based on whether anything paranormal is discovered during this program, it could be a learning experience for us all!

Program Plan Outline:

- Welcome and brief introduction for program and FiFP team; snacks and drinks for all
- FiFP will cover team roles and discuss some of their past investigations
- FiFP will have their equipment on display for patrons; the team will demonstrate and explain in detail what each piece is called and how it functions; patrons will also have the chance to pick up and test some of the devices themselves
- The team will show video/photo/audio evidence they have captured
- Q&A session with FiFP
- Patrons and members of FiFP team will break out into five groups to investigate different areas of the library
- To conclude the program, everyone will return as a whole group to share final thoughts, questions, and any evidence they found on their investigation
- Thank both the team and participants for coming and invite them back for future programs

Target Audience & Marketing:

The target audience for this program will be adults 18+. This is primarily due to the subject matter and late hours. Some of the material may be scary for children, which could be potentially disruptive to the rest of the group. According to FiFP, their audience typically skews female with most between the ages of 25-45, so this program should aim for something similar. Adults are most likely to be familiar with the town's history and most have transportation to and from the library for the event. Registration should be required in order to help library staff have a better idea of attendance. Since this is a first-time program, I propose we cap attendance at fifty for now. Then based on attendance and success of the program, this could be increased.

Youth Services Librarian Jeanie Johnston (2015) planned a similar program for teens at her library in Hailey, Idaho that had great success: ninety participants! Lorain Public Library in Ohio held a Facebook Live event where their library was investigated by the Tri-C Ghost Hunters. Outreach Librarian Carolyn Elkort planned An Evening with Spirits of New England Paranormal Society where participants got to interact with their local paranormal team and discuss books and local history. LCPL could plan and structure similar programs for other target audiences like children and teens in the future. That being said, current marketing efforts should be geared towards adults. The program is planned for a Saturday and hopefully this will not interfere with as many work schedules. It will begin at 7:00 PM to give families enough time to have dinner, then the program will conclude at 9:30 PM. I would love to have books pulled for a small display to promote the program. I also asked each FiFP member their favorite book so we can create a "Team Member's Pick" book display. This will hopefully lead to increased interest and use of library materials.

To market this event, we will post a promotional announcement across the LCPL social media platforms, as well as the main library website. FiFP is popular on social media, so they could promote the program on their own platforms (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and their personal website). We will also create and print flyers to post in the library, various local businesses, and the Lincoln Cultural Center, with their permission. We could also request an announcement on some of the local radio stations. To help promote, we could advertise that one of the participants will win a free t-shirt and autographed poster from the FiFP team. I feel like the potential prize aspect always attracts more buzz for programs. FiFP has agreed to donate both prizes at no cost to the library. This type of program is good promotion for them, too, so the program is potentially beneficial for both parties.

Budget:

This program is fairly low-budget. The team does not require payment for this event and the library will not have to purchase any special equipment since FiFP will bring their own, which allows us to allocate funds for other areas. The team has volunteered to provide speakers and an outdoor movie screen. They will be donating an official FiFP t-shirt and autographed poster to the winner of a drawing. We will budget to print a larger promotional poster to display in the library. Refreshments will be provided for the group (glazed doughnuts, both regular and decaf coffee, and water). We will need disposable cups, sugar, and coffee creamer. Planning, marketing, and outdoor setup/seating arrangements will be completed during normal work hours. One salaried staff member will stay with the group for the duration of the program. Funds for this program will be used from the Programming budget. For future programs, the library may need to update or purchase their own audio equipment and possibly a projector screen. Based on anticipated attendance, most of the budget is going towards refreshments, which would likely need to increase for a larger audience.

ITEM	AMOUNT
Marketing	\$10.00
Refreshments	\$120.00
Personnel/Staff Time	-
TOTAL	\$130.00

Program Evaluation:

To make it as easy as possible for patrons, I created a survey that can be accessed via QR code. The code can be printed and posted at the event for patrons to scan directly from their smart phones. This method is environmentally friendly and super convenient for both staff and patrons, plus the data is collected electronically at no charge on SurveyKing. A survey link can also be distributed by e-mail. This survey will give us insights regarding patron satisfaction with the program, as well as any recommendations participants may have for future programming. For incentive, everyone who completes the survey can be entered into an additional drawing to win a t-shirt and poster.

Program Evaluation Form- Library Night with First in Fright

Please choose an answer for the following:

1. This program met my expectations. (Agree/Disagree scale)
2. The material was interesting and I learned something new. (Agree/Disagree scale)
3. The program time and location were convenient with my schedule. (Agree/Disagree scale)
4. Would you recommend this program to a friend or family member? (Y/N)
5. Did you use library resources or check out materials as a result of this program? (Y/N)
6. How did you hear about this program? (multiple choice)
7. What changes, if any, would you recommend for this program? (open-ended)
8. Do you have any suggestions for future library programs? (open-ended)



References

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