By Allyson Betot
Around the Town
Editor

For the second year in a row Red Springs and Northern Railroad asked the University Players to participate in their annual Fright Train event in Parkton, N.C.
The event was held on Oct. 28-29, with trains running every 30 minutes from 7 p.m. to midnight.
Several improvements were made from last year, including more student participation and a few stages that were built specifically for a few scenes.
“This year we added an additional scene, so students walking the track for communication and gave scenes control of their lights,” said David Underwood, faculty adviser for the University Players.
Thirty-five students were split into eight groups to perform scenes along the train tracks. Scenes included a cesarean section involving a chainsaw, an alien autopsy gone wrong, and a lousy clown that goes on a killing spree.
“I participated in Fright Train because it’s an overall good experience. Not only do you get to act, you make relationships with new people. The new members this year brought a new energy to the production,” said Kenneth Ferguson, sophomore, who was a returning participant.
This year, Introduction to Theater students were allowed to participate in Fright Train to fulfill their production requirement.
In previous years, the production requirement for the class has been limited to working on a play or the costume or scene shop in GPAC to obtain hands on experience within the theater.
“I felt that working on the Fright Train would give a similar benefit. [Students] would work on all aspects of theatre, from writing a script, to designing and obtaining costumes and props, to performing,” Underwood said.
Last year approximately 1,700 people came out to ride the Fright Train. This year the number of riders went down to 1,000.
“The weather hurt our attendance this year at the Fright Train. We are pleased with the number of riders because we were unable to run the last trains due to the weather,” said Sally Cobb, event coordinator for Red Springs and Northern Railroad.
The goal of the Red Springs and Northern Railroad is to save a historic railroad and create jobs in Robeson County. Events like the Fright Train have enabled the foundation to purchase the railroad, pay for insurance and make improvements,” Cobb said.
The next Red Springs and Northern Railroad event is Rails to Christmas in Red Springs on Dec. 2-3 and Dec. 9-10. The Rails to Christmas ride takes passengers through Christmas lights across Red Springs.