



Mt. Aetna Camp and Retreat Center is a Christian facility dedicated to the care and instruction of God's children, young and old alike!

Our outdoor education programs focus on ecology, outdoors skills, recreation, and study of God's creation. Classes include: pond exploration, forest study, astronomy, wild edible plants, survival shelters, fire building, initiative games, low and high ropes courses, canoeing, etc.

Standard Outdoor School runs from Monday to Wednesday, but you can customize the program for longer stays or for day camps. Dates are available from September to May. We can provide the instructors, or you can provide your own.

Our facilities include heated cabins, vegetarian food service, indoor meeting space, a seasonal swimming pool, a fabulous nature center and more.

Call for rates and availability. For curriculum specifics, ask for the outdoor educator.



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
www.adventist.org

Mt. Aetna Camp and Retreat Center

21905 Mt. Aetna Road
 Hagerstown, MD 21742
 301-824-6045 • 301-824-6373 (fax)
www.mtaetnacamp.com

The Mount Aetna Accounts
V O L U M E 2



No one
 wants
 to go
 home

A story of exploration

*A short
 story by*
**Charlene
 Milam**



LOOK, MR. SPRINGER. IT'S A TOAD!

The book at the nature center said that's its name! Isn't it cool! Watch the way he moves one eye one way and the other one another way! Ooops, I guess he wanted to get down."

The rest of my fifth grade class is still packing up, getting ready to go home after our three days of outdoor school here at Mt. Aetna Camp. Did you know that Maryland public schools require all kids in 5th grade to go to outdoor school? Well, Mt. Aetna Camp is sure the place to go for it! They have the neatest nature center with all sorts of animal displays like the Smithsonian. The cabins are cool too. They have their own bathrooms and everything. There's this big outdoor amphitheater, a huge bonfire ring, a climbing tower, and canoes and bikes and a huge swimming pool. Just about anything you could want.

The very first night we arrived, we got to take our sleeping bags outside and look at the stars. Mr. Springer said it was a lesson in Astronomy, but it sure wasn't like any lesson we've ever had in the classroom! First he told us how to find Orion's belt, and then Orion, and then the Dippers, both the Big and the Little one. He brought out a



telescope and we got to look at the craters on the moon and we could actually see the rings around Saturn! I wanted to stay up all night, but as soon as my head hit the pillow, I was gone. I could hardly wait for breakfast, and was it good.

We learned all kinds of things while there; stuff like how to purify drinking water, and why we want to keep working hard to keep all our water supplies, lakes, rivers, ponds and oceans, clean. We collected water samples from the stream and the pond and looked at them with a microscope. Yuk! There were all kinds of bugs and things crawling in the water. It was nasty, and so cool!

We found bugs, and snakes, and collected rocks and leaves. I even know most of their names.

Later we used a compass, and built shelters that you could live in if you forgot to pack a tent when you were hiking; some of us made a trail and others had to find their way through it to the other end; we got to do team building stuff like trying to stand, as a group, on a swinging log and balance a giant see-saw called "Titanic"; we even got to do the high ropes course and the climbing tower! The safety people kept reminding us to be safe, and they kept checking our equipment, but it was still freaky standing way up there and then stepping off!



No one wants to go home now that our trip is over — not even the kids who said they didn't like camping! I sure wish every day at school was like a day at Mt. Aetna Outdoor School! Gotta go.

"Hey, Mr. Springer, can I hold 'Grumpy' the lizard!"