

## Three Springs Farm Provides Valuable Space For Teens

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week-long residential camps, and weekend retreats are all part of the package that focuses the kids' attention on Christian values and beliefs.

In a typical day at the residential camp, the staff is onboard at 7:15 a.m. for a meeting. Breakfast is at 8:30 followed by personal devotion time for the kids.

"The kids are told to separate around the grounds. They have study guides and their Bibles," explained Rush.

At about 9:30 a.m., the group comes together for group worship and singing followed by a teaching time. Then the kids again break up into groups to discuss the morning's topic. The morning learning sessions are followed by an organized game such as volleyball, soccer and other sports. Right before lunch they come together again to give kids the opportunity to interact with the staff.

"We call this time 'hot topics' and we give the kids the opportunity to ask all kinds of questions — questions about dating relationships, parents, the world in general, and sometimes Biblical questions," Rush said.

Following lunch, the kids have an hour of elected activities including archery, horseback riding, craft projects and exercise activities among other things.

The kids also get plenty of free time in the afternoon for swimming, hiking, fishing or other activities.

After supper, the group comes together once again for some singing and teaching time and then they enjoy a planned evening activity followed by more free time. At about 10:30, the group is called together once again to talk about the day's activities and everyone retreats to their cabins for a good night's sleep.

The schedule for the wilderness activity weeks are very different. Kids choose either the mountain biking camp or horseback riding camps. With the mountain bike riding camp, staff members take the kids to a predetermined spot and the kids plan their route to get to the next predetermined campsite, working their way back to the home camp on a 150-mile trek. On the horseback riding camps, kids go on a weeklong trailride, covering 15-17 miles a day for a 100-mile round trip.

To tote the gear needed for a whole week, campers get a cube of space in a trailer that gets moved from campsite to campsite by staff members. Also in the trailer is a food storage area and a fresh supply of drinking water.

"What the kids do is pack up camp in the morning, lock up the trailer and just leave. Then one of our staff goes out during the day, and we hook on the trailer and move it to the next campsite. We unhook it and leave.

"When campers arrive, the trailer is there, and they can set up camp. What's nice is especially with the horseback weeks, we have an opportunity to resupply with hay and feed. We don't have to worry about grazing animals," explained Rush.

Three Springs also offers backpack weeks where older students hike through the wilderness carrying everything they need in their packs.

Camp members learn leadership and planning skills through these activities.

"This year offers 10 different wilderness weeks and as far as residential camps. There are three that we actually sponsor

and staff ourselves and there are several that we do the support work and provide the facility. Some churches in Southern Pennsylvania have a large high school ministry and might bring 50-60 kids from one church. For those, we just fill in the gaps - provide some of the activities and the food, and sometimes some teaching and leading music," Rush explained.

To run the camp, there are seven full-time staff members with additional staff in the summer, and a full-time nine member board of directors, which oversees all activities. Board members are from various backgrounds including business and ministry. Jeff and Deanne's three sons, Aaron, 14; Seth, 12; and Adam, 8, also take part in the work and fun of living at a year-round retreat center.

"I like it, I have lots of friends that come up and it gives me lots to do!" said Aaron.

Part of living on Three Spring Farm is also raising food for both the campers and the livestock. "We put up about 3,000 bales of hay each year and farm some ground that belongs to the neighbors," said Rush.

They also raise some beef ani-

mals, butchering two to three each year as food for the campers, have a small orchard, processing about 100 gallons of applesauce every year, and have grown their own sweet corn. This year they will purchase sweet corn from a neighboring farmer, but still plan to process about 2,000 ears. They also raise their own potatoes and other fresh vegetables.

"There's lots of reasons to do this. Cost is one factor, and we think we can have better food quality than going out and buying it," said Rush.

All these activities add up to a full schedule for both campers and workers alike, but the Rush family wouldn't have it any other way.

According to board member Todd Morehart, the camp works because of Jeff Rush's ability to stick to his founding principles.

"Jeff's premise that he founded the camp on was to minister to teens from 13 to 19 years old, and to get them into a saving knowledge of their creator. Everything that happens here is towards that end, for sure," said Morehart.

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## Craft Fair

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — More than 250 juried members of the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen will exhibit original work at the 54th annual State Craft Fair of the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen. From July 28-30, the show will be conducted in the Alumni Sports and Fitness Center at Franklin and Marshall College, College Ave., Lancaster.

Show hours are 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday. Several craftsmen will offer demonstrations on their creative work.

Admission is \$6 and children under 12 free. Free street parking. For more information, call (800) 684-7440.

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