



Echoes from ECCO

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Visit us on the web at www.ConferenceCenter.org or www.ECCOyosemite.org

Great Dates for 2009 & 2010!

By Melva Hale, Guest Services Director

Look what \$49 can buy!

For just \$49 per person, get an evening's lodging, breakfast, lunch, meeting room and beautiful grounds for that midweek planning session you and your associates have needed to schedule.

Come to ECCO!

It's not too soon to arrange your one-day getaway planning retreat, to help you get through the holidays and 2010. ECCO has some midweek space available this fall.

Come up one evening for a good night's sleep, awake to breakfast, and enjoy your meeting with a healthy lunch. Grab some free time in the afternoon. Relax, enjoy and depart refreshed.



ECCO at night—Photo by Donna Lalev

Remember, ECCO's staff is here to serve, and that's just what we want to do. Call today, or send me an [email](#). I **want** to hear from you.

2010 Winter Weekend Openings

Have you considered a winter retreat at ECCO?

I currently have two weekends with space available in January (January 8-10, and 29-31) and three weekends with space available in February

(February 5-7, February 12-14, and February 26-28). Get together a group of 15 or more and give us a call.

We're here to assist you.

Check out page 3 for an easy-view calendar of available dates through the end of 2009 (subject to prior booking, of course). Don't delay. Make your reservations now.

Who we are

Located on the north side of the beautiful mountain village of Oakhurst, just 12 miles south of Yosemite National Park, ECCO provides a fitting backdrop to take in the wonder of God's creation. At ECCO you can make time for study, play, discovery, worship, prayer and silence—as you listen to the message of God's heart.

Thanks to Jenny Estes for this beautiful rendition of our mission statement

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Check out our new bus ... see page 6

Next month:

*Finance &
Registration*



Promotional materials should be attractive, understandable and entice people to attend.

Avenues of Promotion

- Brochures
- Posters
- Telephone campaign
- Local newspapers/radio stations
- Sign-up tables
- Bulletin announcements
- Meeting announcements
- Mailers/flyers
- Church program supplements
- Email campaigns
- Website listings

Retreat Planning, Part 4: Setting Your Promotion in Motion

The first essential of successful promotion is to set realistic attendance goals. If your goal is too low, you will likely contract for too little space and end up having to turn people away. If your goal is too high, you will contract for too much space and end up losing money on the retreat. Either way, you will have unhappy people and needless problems to deal with.

Look at attendance figures from previous retreats. Note any changes in your group or community that may affect attendance. Look also at how the focus or content of your retreat may have changed from previous years and how such changes may have affected attendance.

Once you've made your best estimate of expected attendance, your promotional goal is to reach that target.

Promotion should target those individuals most likely to respond to and benefit from the retreat and should communicate—clearly and honestly—for whom the retreat is designed, the purpose of the retreat, and essential information about the retreat: costs, program content and speaker.

Try to recruit three to five enthusiastic people who believe in the retreat and are willing to contact others personally. Draw up a list of potential attendees and divide it among them. Be sure to meet with your recruiters periodically to encourage them and monitor their progress.

Be sure to allow yourself plenty of time to promote the retreat. Every potential attendee should receive initial information a minimum of three months before the event begins. Be sure to set deadlines for producing posters, brochures and flyers—and don't forget to allow time for mailings to reach their destination.

In this age of computers and internet access—not to mention environmental awareness—you can save paper and cut promotional costs significantly by developing email campaigns. It's easy to use a mail-merge to develop a flyer and, with a click of the mouse, send it out to your entire list at once.

Brochure Design

Brochures should be simple, well-designed and concise, including the following information:

- Retreat purpose
- Schedule & program information
- Speaker/presenter information
- List of items to bring (and what NOT to bring)
- Costs
- Registration form, including deadline
- Deposit information
- Any early registration discounts
- Cancellation policies
- Departure/arrival place and times
- Travel information and map
- Name and contact information of registrar

Two great ways to reach us: ECCO now has an additional, easy-to-remember website address: www.ECCOyosemite.org

Our original URL, www.ConferenceCenter.org, is still active and will also continue to take you to all the great information our website contains.

Easy-View Calendar of ECCO 2009 Available Dates

Use this calendar to determine at a glance what dates are available as of June 30, 2009. As soon as you find a date that works for you, call or [email Melva](mailto:email_Melva@ecco@sti.net) at ecco@sti.net and lock it in:

		SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Open dates Full-no openings Limited availability	JULY				1	2	3	4
		5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		19	20	21	22	23	24	25
		26	27	28	29	30	31	
Open dates Full-no openings Limited availability	AUGUST							1
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		9	10	11	12	13	14	15
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22
		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31						
Open dates Full-no openings Limited availability	SEPTEMBER	6		1	2	3	4	5
		13	7	8	9	10	11	12
		20	14	15	16	17	18	19
		27	21	22	23	24	25	26
			28	29	30			
Open dates Full-no openings Limited availability	OCTOBER					1	2	3
		4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		11	12	13	14	15	16	17
		18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Open dates Full-no openings Limited availability	NOVEMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		8	9	10	11	12	13	14
		15	16	17	18	19	20	21
		22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		29	30					
Open dates Full-no openings Limited availability	DECEMBER			1	2	3	4	5
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
		20	21	22	23	24	25	26
		27	28	29	30	31		

Greetings, dear friends!

I'll bet you're wondering where I've been and what I've been up to.

Well, as my boss, Bill Swan, says, "it's been crazy around here." We've been really, really busy with guests lately, and I haven't had much time to even catch up on my beauty sleep.

I want to thank my friend, Marla Moody, who came here for the Artists' Creative Weekend in May. She painted a really wonderful picture of me in watercolor that she gave to Judi. I always knew I was handsome, but Marla really outdid herself with this painting. She's caught every whisker perfectly. Marla and her husband, Al, have come to both of our Artists' Creative Weekends. They bring projects to complete that they don't have time to work on at home. Here they get the peace and quiet they need to concentrate . . . Say, don't you think that's a great idea? Maybe YOU could join us this November 27-29. You can bring any sort of project you want—or just bring a good book to read. It's all about doing exactly what YOU want to do. No deadlines, no rules. I just found out that my buddy, Joan Brumley, will be back again this year to teach a FREE watercolor workshop, too. Just fun, companionship and ECCO's great food and serene surroundings. And best of all? **You get ME!** I'll have more information for you next month.

All my love, Douglas Fur II



Elderhostel at ECCO: Women Winding Toward Wisdom in Yosemite—October 18-22, 2009

An exciting new Elderhostel program, *Women Winding Toward Wisdom in Yosemite*, makes its appearance on ECCO's calendar in October, 2009.

Join with other women as you listen to stories from women who revel in living and teaching in these mountains. Witness natural phenomena as metaphors for your life's journey and fine tune your future through creative strategies, hikes and journaling. Explore your inner landscape, learn techniques to thrive through transitions and gain methods to navigate life stages unique to women of a certain age. Reveal childhood delights and learn to live abundantly in any season. Through Yosemite's majesty discover strategies to cultivate gratitude, harvest wisdom and behold transformation of personality and environment. Learn how many, over centuries, credit well-being, recovery, boldness and integrity to experiencing the awe of the Sierra Nevada. Savor the quiet, connect with your wild nature and listen to the deep wisdom of your heart.

Learn about the work of developmental psychologist Erik Erikson and come to understand his theories of life stages and adult development. Consider the words of prominent authors about the richness of a woman's life and relate them to your own experiences.

The program is facilitated by Karen Marie Erickson, Psy.D. Now in her third decade as a teacher, Karen Marie has taught in Minnesota, Illinois, Oregon, South Dakota and California and traveled to all 50 states in America and Canadian provinces as a consultant for educational, military, business, religious and non-profit organizations.

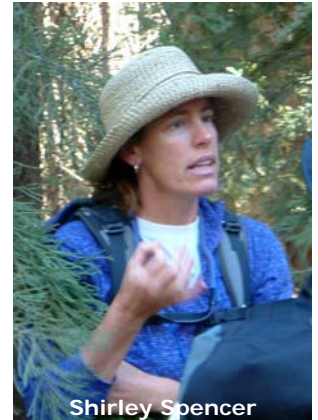
Karen says, "As you listen to strategies, explore and discover memories of all that you dreamed of doing as a child, remember what delighted you. We never begrudge the dreams of children, when we are living big enough dreams ourselves. Fun for yourself; even if just one hour a month, as you begin to take better care of yourself, will make a remarkable difference as a means of seeding joy in your own spirit, igniting the spark of creativity and promoting more effective and joyful service to those you love!"

Like most people who enter the second half of life, Karen is purposefully enjoying resurrected childhood interests through discovery of *Outdoor Writers Association of California*; *Kaweah Fly Fishers'* Trout in the Classroom for 5th graders; shooting trap at Tulare Gun Club; singing at Concordia Lutheran Church in Kingsburg; riding at *Plum Horse Crazy Ranch* and working out as many times a week as possible at Curves in Exeter. . . much to the horses' appreciation.

Don't miss this exciting program, open to women 55 and older—and their daughters.

The program includes a special field trip to Yosemite Valley, led by naturalist extraordinaire Shirley Spencer.

Even if you have been to Yosemite before, you'll see it through new eyes, as she imparts her passion for the park she has loved and explored for decades.



Shirley Spencer



Dr. Karen Marie Erickson

Prices (per person)

Double occupancy	\$784.00
Single occupancy	\$952.00
Commuter*	\$664.00

*Includes all meals and program fees. Lodging not included.

To register, contact [Elderhostel](#) online or call them at 1-800-454-5768.

(Mention program number 17892-101809)

For further program information, contact [Judi](#) at ECCO, 559/683-8162.

The Director's Desk

Was this not a beautiful spring? In June we were hard-pressed to see temperatures in the 80's with only a few 90's at ECCO, and we're definitely not complaining. We have had beautiful cloudy skies during the day and nice cool sleeping weather at night.

ECCO is truly blessed with all of our guests keeping us busy. We only lost only one Cal Fire class due to state budget cuts, and we received donations to help grow our youth ministries, with most of those being for youth scholarships.

In late May/early June, I had the pleasure of serving as host for our first-ever golf Elderhostel. Judi, ECCO's Elderhostel Coordinator, told me, "this will an opportunity for you to see how hard our group leaders work." It truly *was* a lot of work—and long, long hours—but I must say I enjoyed it. How can you pass up three days of golf along with a Wawona Hotel tour led by Tom Bopp followed by dinner and the chance to listen to Tom sing and play the piano?

Even better yet, I got to hang out with 15 awesome people from all over California, from Escondido to Atherton and many points in between, plus a couple from South Carolina! Elderhostel tells us an enrollment of 15 for a first-time active program is excellent!

What really amazed me was the outpouring of support this group gave us when they discovered this was our first golf program. Many had attended multiple golf adventures in other locations and gave us much positive feedback and suggestions for future events.

A huge "thank you" also goes out to Jim at River Creek Golf Course, Mike at Sierra Meadows Country Club and Scotty at the Wawona Hotel for the stupendous support they gave us in organizing the program.

I was involved with this Elderhostel group for 5 of their 6 days at ECCO and now have a better understanding of everyone's roles when it comes to Elderhostel organization.

As summer comes on we enter into our "really" busy time or maybe we should call it our crazy time. This is when Guest Services kicks into high gear and requests "all hands on deck," and we love it! It's why ECCO is here: to serve our guests and welcome you to our home. To see both adults and children take advantage of these beautiful grounds does our hearts good. I know our Lord smiles when He sees everyone enjoying his creation and most of all praising Him with our thoughts, words and deeds.

Our bus is now operational. It's always worked, but in the legal sense we're now good-to-go on the highways and byways. Mary Wardell, Maintenance Manager Terry's wife, has passed her bus driver's physical and DMV's written test. All that's left is the driving test. With Mary behind the wheel ECCO will have more flexibility in using our new bus for not only planned group trips but last-minute adventures as well. We appreciate Mary's efforts.

Our thanks go to the many diversified groups that call ECCO home during their stay with us. Just to name a few who've shared our space in the last month or so: Latvian Evangelical Lutheran from Los Angeles, The Madera Arts Council, St John Missionary Baptist Church from Bakersfield, Vessels of Honor Couples from Bakersfield, Grace Baptist Church from Lemoore (they used our "Team Building" course), St John's Episcopal church from Hampton, Virginia.

It was our honor to serve one and all. As always, *let our ministry help your ministry*. Try us for your next group retreat, seminar, meeting, reunion, wedding; you'll be glad you did.

If you've been to ECCO and want to share a story or pictures with us, we'd love to hear from you. We'll publish your submissions in upcoming issues of *Echoes from ECCO*. Let the world read about your life-changing experiences on our sacred grounds.

Onward and upward, Bill Swan

By Bill Swan



Next month:

Read about the just-concluded Journey to Adulthood adventure of St. John's Episcopal Church from Hampton, VA



This bus could be yours ...
for an hour, a day or longer.

Imagine the possibilities . . .

Bass Lake Nelder Grove Golfing

Hiking Mariposa Grove

Yosemite Valley

Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad

Sierra Vista National Scenic Byway

Fresno Flats Glacier Point

Fresno Dome Tuolumne Meadows

King Vintage Museum

Mariposa . . . and much more.

Expand your horizons. Explore our beautiful surroundings. When booking your group's stay at ECCO, ask our Guest Services Director how you can take advantage of our great new service, a bus—complete with driver—that you can rent for very reasonable rates. It may also be possible to hire an expert naturalist/guide to instruct and lead your group on area outings and hikes. This is just another way ECCO is working to make your stay with us more meaningful.

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