

**CAMP ECHO TRIPPER CONFERENCE  
LA CROSSE, WI, MARCH 28-29, 2009**

**Background & Overview**

Dear Former Trippers & Past/Present Trip Guides:

For years the Camp Echo Adventure Trip Program -- with help from all of you -- has been shaping lives. We know because when former trippers speak of the experiences they've backpacked into adulthood, they often speak of their time in the wilds. As trippers and guides, many of us can point to similar inspirations. We remember the places we've been. Even more, we remember the people.

This phenomenon has recently been cast into sharp relief on the [Jon Brenner pages](#) of the *CaringBridge* website. What comes through, clearly, is that the Echo trip program draws on a uniquely human legacy. And that legacy, for many, starts with Jon Brenner - and the indelible mark he put on the program.

With this in mind, and with the support and guidance of Echo's senior staff (Rob Grierson, Katie Trippi and Lindsay Thompson), we'd like to kick-off a special initiative meant to identify the best parts of what we've all shared--the key ingredients--at the same time we consider: "What makes an Echo trip an Echo trip?"

THE CONFERENCE

For starters, you're all invited to a weekend conference at the Radisson Hotel in La Crosse, Wisconsin, Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> - Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. In case you're wondering, La Crosse is Jon Brenner's hometown and he will be attending the conference. Call it, for now ... *A Brenner Runs Through It*.

THE GOAL

Our goal will be to uncover a set of guiding principles that connect past to future and position the trip program for ongoing success.

YOUR OPTIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

We know this is short notice and La Crosse isn't the easiest place to get to. So we've created three options for participation.

1. Come to the conference in La Crosse, WI. The conference will start 1 PM on Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, and end with brunch on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. **See hotel information in the separate FAQ document.** La Crosse is a 5 hour drive from Evanston/Chicago.

- RSVP to Katie Trippi at [katiet@mcgawymca.org](mailto:katiet@mcgawymca.org) by Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>. Let her know if you're interested in offering or finding a shared hotel room or shared ride.
- For those on tight travel budgets, some assistance may be available. We're also looking for donations to underwrite the conference. Contact Rob Grierson at [rg@mcgawymca.org](mailto:rg@mcgawymca.org) if you need financial help, or to make a donation.

or

2. In a page, send a trip memory to [ish@greencirclepartners.com](mailto:ish@greencirclepartners.com) by Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>. What stories or snapshots come to mind when you think of your best trip moments? What experiences made your Echo trips most special? Who were your friends and heroes? What small or large events still stand out?

or

3. For all those willing to get a little hokey (we are camp people, after all) please join us, wherever you are, at 10 PM CST on Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> by going outside for a quiet minute of staring at the stars and thinking about your favorite tent-mates. They'll no doubt be thinking about you.

Got more questions? Need more details? Please see the FAQ.

Still feeling the spirit,

*Ish & Shane & Steve & Mike & Chris*