

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
MEIGS COUNTY EXTENSION

Planting Seeds Of Hope

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When: **April 17, 2014**

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Where: **Mulberry Community Center**

260 Mulberry Avenue

Pomeroy, Ohio 45769

Guest Speakers:

Deborah Perryman - Keynote Speaker

“Misunderstood Critters”

Brigid Trimble

“Moving Youth to Action”

Susan VonderHaar

“Empowering Children to be

Stewards of the Earth”

Jenny Richards

“Bringing Children to the Forest”

Julia Liljegren

“Connecting Kids with

Wildlife & Habitat”

Planting Seeds of Hope

American Society is once again at a major crossroads. The economy is faltering. Foreign policy has embroiled us in two wars. Natural resources are declining at an alarming rate. Health care is in desperate straits. And our educational system simply is not working. It takes a catastrophe of one sort or another to awaken us to the perils facing our society. Some hope that the federal government will devise a strategy to remedy the situation. Some choose to play a waiting game, believing that the problems will simply resolve themselves. And others have decided to take matters into their own hands, wanting to return to a simpler time, a more meaningful way of life when family, friends, and faith were the foundations to fulfill their dreams.

Planting Seeds of Hope is a step in that direction. The underlying goals of this conference are a return to greater measure of self-sufficiency; a re-enforcement of family togetherness; and a renewed bond with and understanding of nature. We have become all too dependent on modern technology. Our every need is satisfied by people, production, and energy beyond our immediate control. As a result, we have become more and more removed from the land that nourishes us. Today's youth (and many of their parents) do not know how to raise their own food. Many of them have never planted a garden. This conference will plant *the seeds of hope* to begin to change all of this. It is time for parents, children, elders, and friends to come together to once again learn and share the basic principles of gardening and understand the importance of biodiversity, working together to share ideas, labor and the harvest wrought from the sweat of their brows.

Keynote Speaker: **Deborah Perryman**, holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from Western Michigan University, where she was a double major in Biology and Secondary Education. She then attended Aurora University earning a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership (administrative Certification Program). Deb also holds a Master's Degree in Biology from Northern Illinois University. Deb has been teaching at Elgin High School since 1994 where she and her colleagues have managed to build an Environmental Program that is considered one of the best in the Nation. The Environmental Science Curriculum centers around a 40 acre campus nature trail and outdoor classroom that provides environmental education programs for their community. Deb's work has won her many accolades including the “2002 Conservation Educator of the Year” by the Illinois Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Illinois Good Neighbor Award from Izaak Walton League and the “2005 Illinois Teacher of the Year” from the Illinois State Board of Education. In addition, she was named a “National River Hero” by River Network for her efforts to restore Poplar Creek, the only B stream in Cook County, Illinois (Chicago region).

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Deborah Perryman— Keynote Address

“Misunderstood Critters”

When you teach biology and environmental science people assume you know more than you really do. Apparently a degree in biology qualifies you to identify the creepy spider trapped in a jar. It also makes you an expert in saving indigent wildlife left on your desk in a shoe box. I am incredibly allergic to Poison Ivy so imagine my delight in finding a Ziploc baggy filled with my nemesis and a note that read “It gave my daughter a rash, what is it?” A good portion of my time is spent educating my students and the community about Illinois’ Natural History. I find myself defending the importance of coyotes, mosquitoes, and skunk cabbage. But there is only one critter who can claim to be the most misunderstood in North America. Today I would like to share my insights into this unique organism.

Brigid Trimble

Brigid is entering her eighth year of teaching at Elgin High School in Elgin Illinois. She has taught grade levels 9-12: Environmental Science, Biology, and Earth Science. The student population at EHS is predominantly Hispanic, so she chose to go back to school to get certified to teach English Language Learners to help close the divide in the classroom. She holds two Bachelor degrees, Biology and Plant and Soil Science, as well as a Masters in Biology. Prior to entering into the field of Secondary Education, she worked at the local community college coordinating after school programming for middle school children and facilitated continuing education classes for teachers.

Moving Youth to Action

During this session we will give you the nuts and bolts of creating viable Service Learning Projects like those highlighted in the Keynote Address. This session is applicable to formal and non-formal educators, as well as natural resource professionals interested in partnering with schools. From design to evaluation we will walk you through the implementation of a Service Learning Project. Resource materials provided.

Susan VonderHaar

Heavily under the influence of the early Environmental movement and the first Earth Day, Susan VonderHaar has been an Environmental Educator since 1970 when she organized her neighborhood friends and classmates into an Ecology club. Earning degrees in Biology and Environmental Science led to over 20 years of Eco-toxicity research for the U.S. EPA. The arrival of her children brought her back to the passionate love for sharing the wonderment of the Natural world. With help from many other parents, and the enthusiastic participation of the school community she has been the Dater Montessori Nature Center Coordinator since 1996. She is also an instructor at Brown Mackie College and conducts adult Environmental Education workshops. Her teaching approach is always hands on, empowering and FUN! "When you feel joy, learning happens naturally."

Empowering Children to be Stewards of the Earth

Development of the Dater Montessori Nature Center began in 2000, the spring before the Carson Montessori school community moved to a new location. With full sun and expansive acreage, the possibilities for a new Nature Center seemed endless. Over ten years later the area consists of 600 sq ft of vegetable gardens, a 3 Sisters Guild, multiple Butterfly gardens; a Woodland area, a Wetland, and Arboretum and Orchard. Most uniquely, is the 4000 sq ft Meadow Maze of Native Ohio Grasses and Wildflowers; originally planted by the students and maintained with the help of parent volunteers. Efforts culminated into a collection of over 85 outdoor curricular activities in the ENCASE Guide (Enjoying Nature Center As School Extension). Programs include outdoor classroom lessons, after school clubs, seasonal family events, and a summer Nature Camp. The long time Nature Center Coordinator walks you through a story of struggles and glory creating, funding, and maintaining a school Nature Center, accessing it for learning, and educating a public school system on the value and beauty of “Natural Areas”. This interactive presentation includes song, stories and imaginative play which are vital for learning at any age.

Jenny Richards

Jenny has been a Naturalist in the Shawnee State Park Region for the past 13 years. She loves sharing her passion for nature with everyone who visits, especially children. She graduated from Ohio University, traveled a bit working abroad, and then moved back home to purchase land on the edge of Shawnee Forest where she grew up. Her favorite activities include exploring streams, wild

edible walks, bird watching and searching for reptiles and amphibians. There is nothing in the great outdoors that Jenny does not get excited about.

Over the past 13 years I have been working as a naturalist in Shawnee State Park. One of the most amazing parts of the job, if you can call it that, is the time I get to spend outside with school kids. Nothing is more thrilling than seeing a child light up at the sight of a bird, the sounds of frogs from a vernal pool or hold a snake for the first time. During this talk I will share my experiences and hope to inspire everyone to take a little extra time to explore nature the way they did as a school kid.

Julia Liljegren

Julia Liljegren is the Regional Education Advocacy Manager for the National Wildlife Federation’s Great Lakes Regional Center (NWF-GL) based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Her focus is on inspiring and empowering people of the Great Lakes region to integrate nature into each child’s world view and building the capacity and opportunities for them to do so. She is responsible for developing state and regional strategies and initiatives to connect people – especially children – with nature, advocating for implementation of those strategies and initiatives, and developing collaborations among agencies and organizations to advance people’s abilities to connect with and understand the great outdoors. Julia has won national awards in public relations and for educational products she developed, has served on committees with the National Association for Interpretation, and has acted in a multitude of capacities to foster stewardship of our natural world.

Connecting Kids with Wildlife & Habitat

Learn about Wildlife Nation, an on-the-ground and online kids and wildlife community of cause created by the National Wildlife Federation that engages parents and other adults to get kids outdoors in nature and foster generations of conservation stewards who care about and for wildlife. Members of “the Nation” take on-the-ground actions to get kids outdoors as well as online actions through a social community platform. Three ways to get involved are highlighted – NWF’s Trees for Wildlife program, signature Great American Backyard Campout event, and suite of Certified Wildlife Habitats programs (schoolyard, backyard and community habitats) – but members are encouraged to get involved in whatever ways speak to them and the kids in their life. Find out how you and those you know can connect kids of all ages with wildlife and habitat and make a lasting, meaningful and lifelong difference for both.

Registration Form:

(please mail registration form and check payable to Meigs County Extension before deadline March 17, 2014)

“Planting Seeds of Hope”

Number of Attending _____

Price per person x \$35.00

Total Amount \$ _____

Make check payable to Meigs County Extension

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

****Lunch and Refreshments included****

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