Librarians Venture Outside: Lifelong Learning through Gardens and ecoEXPLORE
NC Live Annual Conference, Monday, May 13, 2019

Description: Learn how librarians form partnerships with local and state organizations to support lifelong learning outdoors. Becky Schneider will discuss how her library supports gardening and gardeners through classes, a seed exchange, and a teaching garden. The library is able to do this work through partnerships with the Cooperative Extension, Soil & Water Conservation District, and area farms, businesses, and nonprofits. Libbie Dobbs-Alexander will discuss the N.C. Arboretum's ecoEXPLORE initiative, and how it is being used to support lifelong learning outside everywhere from Madison County Public Libraries - Library Journal's 2018 Best Small Library in America -- to the Greensboro Public Library. This panel will be facilitated by Noah Lenstra of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Speakers: Becky Schneider, Person County Public Library, bschneider@personcountync.gov
Libbie Dobbs-Alexander, North Carolina Arboretum, edobbs@ncarboretum.org
Noah Lenstra, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, lenstra@uncg.edu

Stay involved and connected at LetsMoveLibraries.org!

Additional Resources:

- **ecoEXPLORE** – An initiative of the North Carolina Arboretum. See what libraries are already participating and get involved at [https://www.ecoexplore.net/](https://www.ecoexplore.net/)
- **N.C. State Extension** – The cooperative extension system, including county agents, Master Gardeners, and Master Naturalists, frequently partner with libraries for nature-based programs. Find your local agent and get involved at [https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/](https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/)
- **North Carolina State Parks** – a frequent partner of local public libraries for nature-based programs. [https://www.ncparks.gov/](https://www.ncparks.gov/)
**ParkRX** – A D.C. based non-profit with deep connections to Maryland – “In October 2013, the National Recreation and Parks Association, with support from the National Park Service, convened a group of practitioners to discuss the emerging trend of prescribing nature to improve mental and physical health.”

John Henderson, Executive Director, 202.549.8233, john@parkrxamerica.org, very interested in how public libraries can help support movement to get more people experiencing the health benefits of being in nature.

**Association for Library Service to Children** – Children’s Learning Garden (blog post highlighting library garden in Cleveland, Ohio, funded by ALSC) - https://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2018/08/childrens-learning-garden/


**Kellogg-Hubbard Library** – StoryWalk® – Official homepage of StoryWalk, a movement in “50 states and 12 countries,” with the majority in part sponsored by public libraries. https://www.kellogghubbard.org/storywalk

**CityLab** – How StoryWalk Gets Kids Reading and Parents Moving – September 24, 2018, One of the best news articles on this international movement - https://bit.ly/2Q0Z2Sq


**National Park Service** – Public Libraries to Public Lands initiative - https://www.nps.gov/goga/mylibrary.htm

Program initially developed with San Francisco Public Library. Lots of potential to collaborate!

**San Francisco Public Library** – Learn how and why this library made “active experiences in nature” one of the three pillars of its summer learning program, alongside “reading enjoyment” and “STEM learning” - sfpl.org/summerstride/
Sample Budget

Garden

Raised Beds: 4’ x 4’ x 2’ (3) and 4’ x 8’ x 2’ (2)

- 2” x 8” x 8’ treated lumber (18), 4” x 4” x 8’ treated lumber (7)
  Donated by Lowe’s Roxboro (total value for lumber about $400)

- Garden soil – 8 cubic yards
  $350 from landscaping supply including delivery, no discount

Fastenings

- Donated by Person County Schools. Otherwise, 200 5/16 5.5” lag screws

- Landscaping fabric
  Donated by Rolling Hills Garden Supply

- 1 truckload mulch (about 3 cubic yards)
  $150 including delivery, discounted price from Southern States Roxboro

Tools and Miscellaneous

- Transplants / seeds
  Donated by local businesses & organizations

- Hoses
  Already owned

- Watering nozzle
  Donated by reference librarian ($15 if purchased)

- Garden tools
  Donated/lent by reference librarian ($75 if purchased)

- Watering can
  Donated by reference librarian

- Plastic bins for harvest
  Donated by reference librarian

- Stakes and ties
  Purchased ($30)

- Rocks for garden labels
  Purchased ($10)

- Deer spray
  Purchased ($12)

Seed Library

- Seeds & 1000 seed envelopes
  $100–$140 / year

- Card Catalog Cabinet
  $220, purchased on Amazon

- 4” x 2” Labels
  $9.90 for 500

Becky Schneider
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Partners

**Bayer CropScience**
Donated pollinator-friendly wildflower seeds

**Beekeepers Association**
Taught classes

**Cooperative Extension**
Taught classes and helped with planning

**Friends of the Library**
Donated funds

**Garden Club**
Donated funds

**High school agriculture program**
Provided volunteer labor and expertise to build and fill beds, donated transplants

**Local history museum**
Spearheaded seed library and helped with heirloom seed selection

**Local organic farm / local businesses**
Provided extensive input and donated transplants and supplies

**Nonprofit serving disadvantaged youth**
Taught classes, volunteered in garden, and helped with planning

**Soil & Water Conservation District**
Taught classes and helped with planning

More ideas: 4-H, farmers market, historical society, Master Gardeners, Future Farmers of America, elementary/middle schools, colleges & universities with agriculture departments, county/municipal maintenance department, health department, parks & recreation department, botanical garden, nonprofit community garden, food banks, medical clinic, community health partnership/food council, environmental groups, urban beautification groups, Boy/Girl Scouts, faith organizations, homeschooling groups

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Resources

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association
www.carolinafarmstewards.org
Advocacy/membership organization for sustainable farming

Community Food Strategies
communityfoodstrategies.com
Network of North Carolina food councils

Farm to School Coalition of NC
farmtoschoolcoalitionnc.org
Organization for school gardens and farm partnerships

NC Cooperative Extension Publications
content.ces.ncsu.edu
Planting guides and more

NC Department of Agriculture: Agronomic Services
www.ncagr.gov/agronomics
Information about soil tests in North Carolina

North Carolina Community Garden Partners
www.nccgp.org
Directory and resources for community gardens

Seed Libraries
seedlibraries.net
Toolbox for running a seed library

Seed Savers Exchange: Gardening and Seed Saving Resources
www.seedsavers.org/learn
Features a great seed-saving chart

Southern Exposure
southernexposure.com
Good source of open-pollinated/heirloom seeds from Upper South

Webjunction: Growing Library Garden Programs
www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/growing-library-garden-programs.html
Extensive list of resources and articles related to library gardens and seed libraries

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