



The First Annual Ready, Set, Grow! Lecture Series at Cherryland Middle School

If you love your yard and the environment, are looking for gardening ideas, or consider yourself to be a lifelong learner, the Ready, Set, Grow! lecture series has something for you. Each month, local experts will share their expertise on a variety of topics that focus on healthy living and stewardship of our natural resources. All presentations will take place from 6:00 – 7:30 in the multi-purpose room at Cherryland Middle School in Elk Rapids. A donation of \$10.00, at the door, is suggested. Proceeds will go toward purchasing supplies needed by the volunteer leaders of Cherryland's W.O.W (World of Wonder) after school student clubs. For more information or to reserve a seat, please email Sarah Pierson at spierson@erschools.com or phone 264-8991.

January 31 "Biodynamic Farming"

Come listen to Angela Macke, owner of Light of Day Organics and the only Biodynamic® certified farm in Michigan, as she introduces the concepts behind this all encompassing farming philosophy. Biodynamic® agriculture is an ecological farming system that views the farm as a self-contained and self-sustaining organism. Emphasis is placed on the integration of crops and livestock, recycling of nutrients, soil maintenance, and the health and well-being of the animals, the farmer, the farm, and the earth: all are integral parts that make up the whole.

February 16 "Garden Designs for Home, School and Community Gardens"

Sarah Thayer will present a photo tour and tip session on how to design a garden to best meet your needs and make you want to do it again the next year. Pictures of existing school and community gardens designed by the presenter will be featured. Tips will cover areas such as layout, plant choices, incorporating native and perennial components, succession planting, and maximizing your space while minimizing the work.

March 13 "Ordering and Starting Garden Seeds"

Phyllis Wells of the Wells Family Farm will share her tried and true tips for giving your seeds a good healthy start. She and her husband sell their produce at the Elk Rapids Farm Market and grow their fruits, vegetables, and flowers as close to organic as possible.

April 12 "Mushrooms in your Garden"

Yvonne Stephens has been cultivating shiitake mushrooms with her husband, Jason, since 2007. She will demonstrate various ways to get started growing shiitake, oyster, and wine cap mushrooms in your own backyard. These mushrooms are a great source of protein and other nutrients, and are a fun addition to a home garden. Yvonne is the Event Coordinator for ISLAND, a small arts and ecology non-profit organization in Bellaire. ISLAND holds workshops year round on mushroom cultivation, food, farming, and more. For a full list of events, visit www.ARTmeetsEARTH.org.

May 24

"Looking Beyond the Landscape: How Our Landscape Decisions Impact Birds, Butterflies, and Other Creatures."

Join Matthew Bertrand of the Grand Traverse Conservation District for an inspiring exploration into how our landscapes impact the living creatures around us, focusing on how plants form the basis of regional ecosystems. You'll also learn how partners in the Grand Traverse Regional Invasive Species Network (ISN) are working to keep our region's natural areas of the quality needed to support the outdoor recreational and tourism activities that define our region.