Corinna Kirkland-Caplan has found her niche. This summer marks her first season as Camp Director for Bear Yuba Land Trust’s Earth Encounters Nature Day Camp.

“I love having the opportunity to introduce kids to the wonders of nature,” said Kirkland-Caplan.

While an environmental science major at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Kirkland-Caplan worked as a forest service intern connecting inner city school kids with the outdoors.

At first she was reluctant.

“I liked kids but I hated babysitting when I was growing up,” she said. Hesitantly, she took the job.

"I started doing it. I was a little nervous at first, but I actually loved it," she said. For two summers she traveled to various youth camps taking city youth from troubled homes and rough urban neighborhoods out to the woods.

"Taking them out of the city was a great way to connect them with nature," said Kirkland-Caplan. Kids who had never left the city visited places like Lake Superior, sat on bluffs to watch the sunset or rode along during black bear studies. At first, young campers who admitted they had never heard a cricket chirp were frightened of common critters like ants, grasshoppers and squirrels. It wasn’t long before their anxiety subsided and they began to appreciate and feel at home in the natural world.

“They were just stunned and amazed at the tiniest thing,” she said.

For six months, she journeyed to Ecuador to study conservation abroad. The Spanish she learned as a kid growing up in Milwaukee attending a bilingual elementary school paid off. She spent one month as an intern at a farm and ecological school teaching rural youth to appreciate nature. After receiving her BS in Conservation and Environmental

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Message from the Executive Director
Marty-Coleman-Hunt

On Saturday night we held our fourth annual Oak Tree Ball to celebrate our 23rd anniversary and recognize local conservation leaders.

Hank Meals received the first John Skinner Sierra Outdoors Recreation Award for Education given by the Land Trust. Hank has been an archaeologist, historian, writer, and photographer in the Sierra Nevada foothills for forty years. He worked for the Forest Service doing surveys of timber sales during which he documented artifacts found at mining, logging and homesteading sites and Native American sites. Hank is one of our most popular Trek leaders.

Greg Archbald received the first John Skinner Sierra Outdoors Recreation Award for Volunteerism. Greg co-founded the Trust for Public Land in 1972. Greg was director of volunteer development for the Golden Gate National Parks Association. He discovered that individuals were far more protective of the land if they had helped to restore or keep it clean. He is leading an effort to inventory and map our local trails.

Elizabeth “Izzy” Martin was recognized with the 6th William Nickerl Award for Conservation Leadership. For more than 30 years, she has remained an environmental advocate in the Sierra. She has worked to promote sustainable farming practices, supporting organic farmers and working with people poisoned by pesticides and to resolve abandoned mines’ toxic legacy. Izzy was elected to Nevada County’s Board of Supervisors and led the fight to designate the South Yuba River as wild and scenic. She led the effort to establish the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. She became CEO of The Sierra Fund. Izzy has helped to develop more than $80 million in State funds for conservation in Sierra Nevada communities, much of which is invested in Nevada County.

We congratulate Hank, Greg and Izzy and appreciate all of their work in conservation.

Oak Tree Ball

From Left to Right: BYLT President Joe Byrne, Greg Archbald (received the John Skinner Sierra Outdoors Recreation Award for Volunteerism), Elizabeth “Izzy” Martin (received the William Nickerl Award for Conservation Leadership) and BYLT Executive Director Marty Coleman-Hunt

Marty Coleman-Hunt presents the John Skinner Sierra Outdoors Recreation Award for Education to local archeologist and author, Hank Meals

Oak Tree Ball photos by Chris Gee

Bear Yuba Land Trust

Mission
Bear Yuba Land Trust exists to create a balance between nature and the needs of the people who make a life and a livelihood here. This is our home. Our mission is to enrich the deep community connection with our land—today, tomorrow, and forever.

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Trails Coordinator Bill Haire and his wife, Joyce, danced to the band Leta’s Blues. This is Bill’s tenth year with the Land Trust.
Meet Farmer Amanda

On a recent morning, elementary school kids stepped on digging forks to loosen soil where they had used knives to cut cover crops like rye, vetch and fava beans. Instead of using a rototiller, Farm Director Amanda Thibodeau is using “kid power” at the Food Love Project, an education farm, part of Living Lands Agrarian Network.

Thibodeau farms on Bear Yuba Land Trust’s 38-acre property known as Burton Homestead, also the site of the popular Earth Encounters Summer Camp.

June will mark Thibodeau’s third summer participating in the Land Trust camps, teaching children where their food comes from. Farm Manager Katie Turner, Farm Intern Chrissy Mehnert and Lola Montez (the resident dog and farm ambassador) join Thibodeau at the farm.

During Indigenous Peoples Celebration Camp, kids will come out to the farm to learn about the “Three Sisters,” a traditional American planting of corn, beans and squash.

“It’s a great way to introduce the concept of seed saving, companion planting and traditional agriculture,” said Thibodeau.

The farmers grow a diversity of crops and always remember to keep it fun. Visiting the farm is one more way that children can connect with the natural world at camp.

“It’s a great antidote to being indoors,” Thibodeau said.

New Camp Director finds her niche

continued from cover

Science with a minor in Biology, she wondered what to do next. She waited tables and volunteered at the Urban Ecology Center.

Her California friends convinced her to move out West. In 2011, she moved to Nevada County and landed a position as a Naturalist Intern at Shady Creek Outdoor School on the San Juan Ridge. This school year, she served as Lead Naturalist and used her science background teaching creek ecology, wilderness survival and forest ecology.

In a digital age, Kirkland-Caplan believes nature camps like the one at the Burton Homestead offer a remedy to Nature Deficit Disorder. She has witnessed first-hand children who are restless in the classroom become calmer and more focused outdoors.

“I think it gives kids who might be kind of lost in a classroom, a chance to thrive,” she said.
Time for Camp!

It’s time for Bear Yuba Land Trust’s annual summer day camp located at Burton Homestead on Lake Vera Purdon Road just a short drive from downtown Nevada City.

Parents can choose from full or half-day programs that build nature experiences for children through hands-on activities, leadership, and old fashioned outdoor fun. Campers sing, build shelters, make crafts, go on nature hikes, tell stories and play outdoor games.

**Indigenous Peoples Celebration Camp (ages 7-12)**
June 10 - 14
Campers learn about local tribes and cultures through activities such as: Drumming, hiking, storytelling, tracking, shelter making, games, and traditional arts and crafts.

**Earth Education Camp (ages 7-12)**
June 17 - 21
Kids explore nature through hands-on science projects: They study animals, identify birdcalls, make shelters, play eco-games and make nature crafts.

**Kinder Camp (ages four to six)**
June 24 - 28
Younger children enjoy an exciting, safe and educational summer camp experience in this half-day program.

Half-day sessions cost $100 per week. Full-day sessions cost $170 per week and include a healthy snack. Campers will also visit the educational farm, the Food Love Project, with Farmer Amanda.

Teens 13-18 can apply for the Junior Stewards Youth Leadership Program. The program can be used toward high school projects and job experience.

Through the “Grandparents are Gifts” program, senior citizens can volunteer to be a camp buddy, help with snack preparation, arts and crafts, storytelling or parking.

For camp information and registration please visit our website at [www.bylt.org](http://www.bylt.org) or contact Jean Gilbert at jean@bylt.org or 530.272.5994 x 205.

Help Send a Child to Camp!

Bear Yuba Land Trust’s Earth Encounters Summer Camp helps connect children with nature and inspires life-long personal responsibility to care for the environment.

Today’s children are tomorrow’s conservationists - but fewer and fewer children are getting outdoors each year. Reconnecting children with the outdoors has become critical to their health and the health of our natural landscapes. Our natural landscapes need the support and protection of individuals with a strong connection to the outdoors.

This June, more than 150 children will visit Burton Homestead to attend BYLT’s Summer Day Camp. There are many children in our community who need financial support to go to camp. Every year, the Camp Scholarship Fund sends children to Summer Day Camp who can’t afford to attend.

Please donate to our Camp Scholarship Fund and help inspire the next generation of conservationists. Every gift is appreciated!

The camp experience makes a difference in children’s lives. This is especially true for children with few opportunities.

To make a gift to the Camp Scholarship Fund, visit our website at [www.bylt.org](http://www.bylt.org) or call Jean Gilbert at 530.272-5994 x 205. Thank you for your support!
Hiking the Newly Completed Deer Creek Environs Trail System

On Saturday, June 1, Trails Coordinator Bill Haire will lead a guided hike on the newly completed Deer Creek Environs Trail System as part of the National Trails Day festivities.

The trail winds through a forest of incense cedars, black oaks and Douglas fir. During spring, native wildflowers are in bloom. Five interpretive signs provide information about the history of indigenous people of the area.

History of the region's mining legacy also unfolds when walking the trail. The Environs Trails follow the Rough and Ready Ditch, one of the first ditches constructed for mining in the area.

The Deer Creek Environs Trails are part of phase 3 of the Deer Creek Tribute Trail; these trails are located on the south side of Deer Creek on property owned by the City of Nevada City. Access to the trail system is via city streets and easements. There is no trailhead parking.

In 2008, Sierra Streams Institute initiated work on the trails with State grant funds. Sierra Nevada Conservancy and Nisenan have also partnered on the project. In 2011, BYLT assumed responsibility for completing the trail and earlier this year the trail was finished, thanks to efforts by many volunteers who contributed hundreds of hours of labor building the trail.

Rick Berry – Teaching Nature Awareness

Earth Skills teacher Rick Berry returns for a fourth season as a visiting instructor during the Indigenous Peoples Celebration Camp at Burton Homestead. Berry is known locally as the founder and director of Four Elements Earth Education and the popular seasonal semester program known as Fox Walkers.

This year, Berry will teach flint napping - the art of making arrowhead and rock tools. “It can really turn kids on if they’re into learning these skills,” Berry said.

Depending on weather conditions, campers may also learn friction fire making. They’ll learn how to make shelters known as “debris huts” using common materials like sticks and pine needles from the landscape. An experienced tracker, Berry may also teach “lost proofing.” “Some people call it ‘way finding.’ It’s without a compass,” he said.

Much of what Berry teaches is nature awareness. Kids learn to pay attention, to look at the world around them, identify hazards like poison oak and spot animal tracks next to their own.

Berry learned from nationally known naturalist Tom Brown, Jr. while attending Brown’s Tracker School on the East Coast.

For 20 years, Berry has taught earth skills across the country, including seven years running the Children of the Earth Foundation, a non-profit program linked to Brown’s teachings. The skills Berry teaches are distilled from many indigenous cultures.

“These are earth skills. They are for everyone,” he said.

Laura Brown
Outreach Coordinator
The month of April blew in some much needed spring storms to Nevada County. At the same time a seven member crew of East Coast (and one Puerto Rican) AmeriCorps Members arrived at Burton Homestead for a month of ecological restoration. The crew pitched their tents in the woods and had just gotten settled in when we put them to work. Throughout the month, their positive attitudes and stellar work ethic allowed them to do an enormous amount of work, both on BYLT’s Preserves as well as on five of our Conservation Easements.

They began at Adam Ryan Wildlife Preserve in Alta Sierra by pulling a forest of Scotch broom. By the end of the month they were very familiar with weed wrenches. At Adam Ryan alone they piled up an estimated 2,340 square feet of the invasive plant.

But the month wasn’t filled with blackberries and scotch broom alone. The team spent a few days at Black Swan Preserve removing invasive bullfrogs that threaten the fragile Western Pond Turtle Habitat. The Conservation Easements they spent time on included the Roth Working Forest Easement building a trail, Animal Place where they worked to reduce fuel loads, and Linden Lea Ranch limbing trees.

The NCCC program is an amazing opportunity for young people ages 18-24 to gain job and life experiences. Together, as a team, they travel around the United States helping non-profits further their missions. They spent time in New York assisting with Hurricane Sandy relief and after their stay in Nevada County the team is headed to Portland to work on urban gardens.

BYLT is so grateful to have had this crew around for the month of April. We look forward to next year when we can apply for another round.

Thanks Gold 1 for all your hard work!

Erin Tarr
Stewardship Program Manager
National Trails Day

This year’s National Trails Day is shaping up to be a dynamic collaboration.

On Saturday, June 1, local outdoors enthusiasts will set up in the Robinson Plaza from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in downtown Nevada City with information booths while numerous others will lead trail activities all over the county.

At 1 p.m., BYLT’s Executive Director Marty Coleman-Hunt, Nevada City Mayor Duane Strawser and Nevada County Economic Resource Council Executive Director Robert Trent will speak at the plaza headquarters.

Several guided walks will start in Nevada City at 9 a.m. including:

- A tree walk in downtown Nevada City with Arborist Zeno Acton and Mary Cahill of Nevada County Walkers
- A hike on the new Environ Trail with BYLT Trails Coordinator Bill Haire
- A hike on the Tribute Trail led by The Sierra Fund
- A ride on Old Downieville Highway and Hirschman’s Trail led by Bicyclists of Nevada County (BONC)

Other activities include:

- A family and wheelchair accessible Nature Hunt on the Hirschman’s Trail with Wild food author Alicia Funk
- A historic walk on Sugar Loaf Mountain with Ray Bryars of Live Healthy Nevada County
- A Tour of the Firehouse Museum with Shelly Covert of Nevada City Rancheria
- A Wheelchair accessible excursion on the Independence Trail with Ana Acton of FREED
- A seven mile full day hike on the Canyon Creek Trail with author Hank Meals
- A Spenceville Ramble with Richard Thomas
- A four hour tour of the historic Blue Point hydraulic mine with Brian Bisnett
- A hike on Pt. Defiance Trail with docents from South Yuba River Parks Association
- Art in the Garden with Sierra Streams Institute

- Trails maintenance day on the Pioneer Trail with Tahoe National Forest on Sunday, June 2

Throughout the day, Fable Coffee will serve tea, coffee, lemonade and fresh baked goods. In the afternoon, Horn of the Bull Taqueria will serve tacos and Lazy Dog will sell hand-dipped ice cream.

Other supporters include: Nevada County Planning Department (Larkyn Feiler), Yuba Watershed Institute, Forest Trails Alliance, South Yuba River Citizens League, Gold Country Trails Council and ParkWatch.org,

For more information about National Trails Day visit www.BYLT.org or contact Outreach Coordinator Laura Brown at laura@bylt.org or 272-5994 x 211.

Visit us online for more information at www.BYLT.org or call our office 530-272-5994
Join Team Land Trust!

Volunteers are the heartbeat of the Land Trust. They help us do the work we do: Build and maintain trails, restore and manage conserved lands, run youth education programs, offer guided treks to the public and reach out to the community through mailings and events.

To be a Land Trust volunteer, visit our website at www.bylt.org, click on ‘Ways to Help’ and then ‘Volunteer.’ It’s fun to spend time with like-minded people working together for a great cause.

Upcoming Treks

June 2  - Nevada City Cemeteries and the HEW Bldg
June 7  - Armchair Trek: The Mars Science Laboratory Mission and the Curiosity Rover
June 15 - The Rome Powerhouse
July 17 - Armchair Trek: Bird Book Bash with Ted Beedy
July 28 - Blue Lake
Sept. 28 - Trini’s Grove
Oct. 19 - Full Moon Walk in Spenceville Wildlife Area
Nov. 29 - 4th Annual Turkey Trek: Deer Creek Extension Trail

For more information or to make a reservation visit our website at www.bylt.org

Dale Johnson, former PG&E employee and amateur historian, will lead hikers to California’s first electricity generating powerhouse on the South Fork Yuba River.

Join us in our commitment to the land. Please recycle this newsletter.