Board Members and Officers present: John H. Harris, President; Robin Leong, Vice President, Jonathan L. Dunn, Past President; Shaun F. Wilde, Treasurer/Membership Secretary; Liga L. Auzins Wurster, Recording Secretary; Shaun F. Wilde, Treasurer/Membership Secretary; Liga L. Auzins Wurster, Recording Secretary; Carol Beardmore, Teresa Connell, Daniel King, Don Marsh, Teodelina Martelli, Robert McKernan, Dan Ruthrauff, Debbie vanDooremolen.

Board Members and Guest absent: Elisabeth Ammon, Judith Dunham, Editor, WFO News, Robert Gill.

Guests: Philip Unitt, Editor, Western Birds (WB), Maci MacPherson, Administrator.

MINUTES

5:00pm Meeting called to order, welcome and roll.

Motion to approve the August 28, 2023, made by Don, seconded by Robin, and passed unanimously.

Welcome New Board Members: Carol Beardmore, Teodelina Martelli, Robert McKernan, and Debbie vanDooremolen. Board and other attendees introduce themselves. New members have had previous experience with WFO.

5:02pm Election of new Board Member:

Jon D.: I approached Lynette Williams (Duman) some time ago, to see if she was interested in being nominated for the WFO Board. This was revisited at the Central Valley Bird Symposium (CVBS) in November. Lynette is a graduate student at UC Davis, has been very active in the birding community, and has done work for the Nature Conservancy. She represents the demographic of graduate students and early young professionals that is under-represented in our leadership. She has expressed reservations about the time commitment, but since we have two openings right now, and one is a 1 year replacement, we can try this out and revisit this at the end of the year. If she is happy with everything she could slot into another term. Lynette has been on the bird ID panel at CVBS for the past two years, she is personable, engaged with the birding world, and takes the perspective of a scientist. She is enrolled in a PhD program at UC Davis involving studies at Suisun Marsh, NoCal. I’ve talked to her in the past couple days about the board, and am happy to mentor her, tell her about WFO. I think she would be perfect for the Board. It’s an empty slot for a year. She could be an important component of the organization. Her husband, Konshau Duman, is a very keen and interested birder, and was on the ID panel at the CVBS. Konshau is one of our research grant recipients this year.

Don: I move that we add her to the Board for the 1 year term, seconded by Debbie, and passed unanimously.
Robin: We should look at getting Board members from other states and we need to look at the skills that our Board needs, i.e., someone who can do development work and/or legal work. One of my suggestions was Lance Donald from Hawaii, where he does a lot on the Big Island, i.e., bird trips, and you can follow him on Facebook and see what he has done.

Carol: We have members from Arizona, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington.

Shaun: **ACTION ITEM:** 1) Succession planning and 2) what we want to do in the long term as topics for Board Retreat.

**REVIEW OF YEAR 2023**

Shaun: Maci, John, and I talked about all the things we do outside our normal activities. Everyone on the Board has done amazing things this year; some are firsts and we’ve reinvigorated others. We had two field trips, one to Costa Rica, and one to Cuba. WFO published *Birds of Inyo County, Including Death Valley National Park*, twice. We established our Legacy Fund. We had the first youth camping trip as a part of the joint WFO-CFO Conference. We had additional Research Fellowships this year due to generous funding. We had 10 Youth Scholarship Recipients. We invested 250K in a CD that has a higher interest rate, so we are earning income. We had a Spring Birdathon that raised 20K from which we were able to give money to the Tricolored Blackbird Group. We hired a Conference Planner. We initiated student webinars - thank you Maci. We now have Student Board Members. We reinitiated a Giving Tuesday Campaign. We should pause for a moment and relish our accomplishments. Thank you everyone.

John H.: Last year we started the current version of the Newsletter on a quarterly basis. Initially it was done as a .pdf by Chris Swarth for about 3 years, then Judith took over and created the electronic Newsletter in its current form. WFO sends out several email blasts, of these, more people open the Newsletter than any other email blast which results in a high percentage of the recipients opening the Newsletter and reading the articles. It would be nice to have more replies and comments. **ACTION ITEM:** Maybe that would be a good item to adapt for the winter Newsletter, ‘more replies to the articles.’ Thank you, Shaun, for the 2023 overview.

Jon D.: We are nearly through three years since Chris Swarth prepared his first newsletter. Cat Waters did a paper newsletter for many years that was included with *WB* mailings. The first Newsletter was in response to Covid in Spring 2020, so we are about to enter our 4th year.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Shaun

We sent over a working budget. There are some things I want to call out because some of you are new to the Board. You expect to see Income and Expenses equal out, but that doesn’t happen usually because we have dollars set aside for publications. If you look at the bottom of the spreadsheet, I put some assumptions in there, things that may be anomalies for this year but are important to understand. We estimated between the expenses and the revenue. For the trips we come out with around 11K for next year. The Birdathon is zero; we don’t have someone to head up the Birdathon which was a big fundraiser last year and raised about 20K. On the Income side, we are estimating some income from the *Inyo* book. We put in an assumption because this year we did a Giving Tuesday, which we haven’t done before, where we saw a small uplift at year end. We are assuming a small uplift of about 5K for the conference, but that is so variable now. Those are some of the Income line items. I tend to be very conservative because I just never know. In the past couple months, we have seen an uplift in donations, not just from Giving Tuesday, but also from
some very generous donors. A donor came forward and contributed 5K, and a number contributed at the $500 level for scholarships.

On the Expense side, there is about 15K for the Board Retreat. We have not done a Board Retreat in 4 if not 5 years, so that is a difference from last year. For the Conference I estimated 115K. For the Income I estimated about 120K. Over time we will see Income and Expenses go up and down, but I do expect we will have a positive on the Conference of about 5K. That is typical for us. Other expenses are Trip Expenses about 20K, Western Birds about 50K, Administrative Expenses around 20-25K.

**John H.:** Our last Retreat was in Fall of 2019, so it will be 4 or 5 years. Since we haven’t decided on details, the actual expenses could be very different.

**Jon D.:** On the last Board Retreat, for Board members the cost of transportation to the Retreat was on them. We paid for the hotel and a conference room in the Palm Desert area. As Robert stated earlier, 15K struck me as high.

**Shaun:** We estimated covering the Board’s rooms, the meeting room, and the food expenses. We did not include covering Board costs for transportation but did include a dollar estimate for a potential Meeting Facilitator. That is what the estimate is based on. The estimate could go down if Board Members decide to call in, rather than be there in person.

**Jon D.:** One Board ABA event was a strategic planning session with charts, etc. The material compiled went into a storeroom and was never looked at again. I’ve never had a positive feeling about strategic planning since.

**Shaun:** We’ve been talking to some facilitators who are less than 5K.

**Robin:** Since we have a Youth Board Member, I’m thinking of funding that person’s attendance. It might be difficult for that person to come to the meeting.

**John H.:** We might want to treat that in a flexible way. It is true that it is a hardship for some people, especially coming from Alaska. It’s a hardship timewise too for some people. There will be some who want to participate virtually.

**Shaun:** **ACTION ITEM:** For everyone on the Board who hasn’t responded to our request, please fill out the form in the Chat to let us know when you could be available, and whether you would call in or drive to the location, would be helpful.

**Shaun:** When we approve, as a Board, a Budget, and if we make a major change to the Budget, we bring that to the Board and request the change. For example, last year, we did not make any Budget changes at all. So, we planned well. Again, we like to be conservative, but we also want to be thinking forward at the same time. We did review this with the Budget Committee a month ago, where it was thoroughly reviewed.

**Motion:** Robin moves to approve the 2024 Budget, seconded by Jon D., and passed unanimously.

5:32pm **The Retreat:** John H.

In the process of planning all the meetings concerning the San Diego Conference, which meetings have been nearly weekly for some people, we thought it would be wise to at least consider the
possibility of having a retreat. We need determine the where and a date, possibly in the late winter or early spring. In talking with the hotel for San Diego conference, we thought we should at least see if they could be available. The pros for that would be 1) that we have Board members that are close to there, 2) it would be a good chance to look at the Conference site, 3) it's a good birding spot, and 4) it is relatively easy to get to – to fly in and out. That doesn't mean we can't consider a different location. We identified a date range that worked for the hotel from looking at the survey.

Shaun: That hotel was willing to give us the rooms with a specific number of charges for food - it was quite low. They were comping the pricing for the rooms for the same price that we are doing for the Conference. They were being generous in terms of us considering their location for two events this year.

Maci: The timing for the retreat would be Friday evening, all day Saturday, and a half day on Sunday, during the first weekend in March 2024.

Shaun: The poll is in the Chat so you can see the details and respond now. John H. and Carol have been talking about having a facilitator. We spoke to a woman by the name of Adrianna Phillips, and I'll put her details in the Chat. She has a website, and she is from San Luis Obispo County. She has a background in biology and marine sciences and is a facilitator with a lot of facilitations for parks and non-profit organizations. I've spoken with her several times on the phone. I think she would be a very good fit for our organization. Adrianna is a possibility if we want to go for an outside facilitator.

John H.: The reason we thought about a facilitator is that sometimes if you have someone from within the organization as the facilitator, it can be awkward for that person to get their own views in there, etc. You also want someone who has the experience to bring the group back into focus and focus on achieving particular goals. Carol, do you want to comment on your experience doing that?

Carol: I work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I did a lot of coordination for meetings and conferences, and facilitations for every meeting for the Arizona Field Ornithologists (AZFO). I would happily step aside if you wanted to go with a professional as I am not. I have much experience at getting people to do things.

John H.: The Board remembers the slides that Shaun has been showing at each of our Board meetings, and the series of steps that show our financial organization. This kind of trajectory was something that evolved when we started talking about what to do with the money that we had, which depended on what goals we had as an organization. I think every few years it’s wise to get together and talk about. It is all too easy to just go along doing things. It’s better to be intentional.

Robin: I think it is money well spent to hire a facilitator that is outside the organization. We need to think in terms of one year, five year, twenty year plans. Having a professional do it, who will study our organization first and make suggestions along the way as the retreat goes evolves.

Carol: ACTION ITEM: I would also be happy to work with John and whoever this other person is, to just insert what is some of my experience.

John H.: That would be awesome. ACTION ITEM: I think having a small Retreat Committee that would meet a few times in advance to develop a plan would be outstanding.

Maci: ACTION ITEM: It would be great to have an idea of where you all see WFO going, what are the goals, what are new ideas, and new places we want to reach. It feels like we are
changing into doing a bunch of new tasks. I like doing new things, but it would also be helpful to have a set plan, so in 5 years, i.e., we want to have this, we want the students to help us with this. Having that laid out as we are changing some of the activities or adding to what our activities are, would be helpful.

Shaun: Echoing what Robin brought up earlier. **ACTION ITEM:** We need to think about our Board, i.e., Board succession, Board nominations, the kind of talents we want, and the diversity of the Board. We have a diversity statement, but it's just a statement. I think it would behoove us to think more critically about where we want to move and how we want to move.

Phil: **ACTION ITEM:** If it saves us any money, and since we are meeting in San Diego, and if we wanted to have any of our meetings at the Museum, I could investigate that. We have a Board Room that is very nice for meetings. If it is on a weekend, there won't be any competition for it. You can keep that in mind. Going back to what Jon D. said about strategic planning, about generating some document that is never looked at. I would remind Jon D. that's it’s not what gets written down that is the important product of a process like this, but it is how it orients the thinking of those of us who participate.

Robin: We must remember that all these plans are just plans. You can change things as you go along, as you see the direction that everyone is going. It's not written in concrete. It's what the Board wanted to do at this retreat, at that time. It's just a plan. Plans are made to be changed.

Jon D.: For the Retreat, the first weekend in March is the 2nd and 3rd and I'll be in Thailand.

John H.: **ACTION ITEM:** It's probably better for the Retreat Committee to meet and brainstorm some topics, and then send it around to the Board for feedback. I don't know that we need to make any decisions today. We do need people to answer the survey and go from there.

**5:47pm**

**MEMBERSHIP**  
Shaun

Thank you all for giving ideas for the Membership Survey. We had great intentions to get that ready to go before the end of the year. Unfortunately, the *Inyo* book has taken up more time than I anticipated, which is good news, because as Dan R. will report, we have sold many copies. **ACTION ITEM:** Maci and I are meeting next week to take all your great ideas for the member survey and put it in a draft which we will share with everyone. We are working with Judith, our Newsletter Editor, to make sure our writing and tone sounds correct sometime in January 2024.

**SAN DIEGO CONFERENCE**

John H.: Planning has been going along very well for the San Diego Conference. I missed the meeting yesterday for reasons out of my control, so maybe Shaun can report on that. We've made a lot of progress about the beginnings of program planning, field trips, and working on the budget.

Shaun: We had a robust discussion yesterday. Dan R., Jessica, and Tia were to meet to discuss the Call for Papers. We had a discussion for potential places for 2025. We talked to several potential speakers. I know Phil has been talking to the universities in Baja and wants to bring up a point about that. Jessica is marvelous, the best and only hire we have made this year.

John H.: Kevin Burns, from San Diego State University, is confirmed for the keynote speaker this year. That's confirmed. Possibly the Plenary Speaker, might be from the Autonomous University in Baja, California. Progress is being made on numerous fronts.
Phil: Just to reiterate what I said in our planning meeting yesterday, is that I’d like to suggest at a minimum that we recruit and provide a scholarship for Hiram Moreno-Higareda, a Ph.D. student, as a Plenary Speaker to speak on his very current research on Ridgway’s Rail which he gave at the CIPAMEX meeting in San Luis Potosi recently. Hiram was in San Diego last weekend for a workshop on Ridgway’s Rail, and to speak at San Diego Audubon’s annual Bird Festival. More broadly, given that we are geographically very close to Baja for the meeting in San Diego, the concept of offering scholarships to students and professionals in Baja California, especially one that might speak, seems logical. In addition to Hiram, Liliana Ortiz-Serrato who has been monitoring the Least Terns and Snowy Plovers in northwestern Baja, the Ensenada area, for quite a few years, and has recently started working on her Ph.D. degree, a doctoral program at CICESE under Eduardo Palacios, Professor at CICESE, her advisor. Whether we would consider recruiting or offering competitively, how many scholarships could we afford? Would we be interested in doing this as a Baja program, but also including La Paz because Gerardo Marron, a birder in La Paz, has done multiple presentations at the CIPAMEX meeting in San Luis Potosi. There is another university there, and Gerardo Marron, with whom I have worked with on several projects, has been a contributor to WB. He has amazing ideas that would make excellent presentations. Both Gerardo and Hiram presented last year at the CEPAMEX meeting in San Luis Potosi. This isn’t coming out of the blue as if they hadn’t done anything like this before. I know the professors in Ensenada: Horacio de la Cueva, senior professor at CICESE and Gorgonio Ruiz-Campos, a professor at UABC and in charge of the bird collection there, both of whom would encourage their students to present. We could offer scholarships, however many, on a competitive basis to other students in Ensenada that would likely be interested and possibly would present as well. Yesterday I sent Shaun and Jessica a seat-of-the-pants budget for what it might be, which varies widely, depending on if we put the researchers up in the hotel for 4 nights, one per room It would be $1000 for someone from Ensenada, and $1200 for someone from La Paz. Of course, if you double up to a room or people host at homes then the cost is going to be a lot less. These figures are the maximum projection.

Shaun: I would edge a little up on your budget. I’m supportive of the thinking. We should make a motion to develop these scholarships a little further. First, because I think it is important, and so we can bring it back to the board for a vote. Secondly, this brings me(Shaun) back to the hole in the budget around the Birdathon, what we are raising money for, and the fact that we are not doing a Birdathon this year, because we don’t have a Coordinator. If we find someone to lead the Birdathon we could use some of that funding for this effort. There are two actions we need to take: 1) Let’s formalize it through the budget approval by the Board. 2) Let’s figure out how to fund it.

Phil: It would benefit our members greatly to be exposed to the great scientists and brilliant birders that are in Baja, and it would benefit them greatly to be exposed to us. So, the place where I sit in an organization that is all about cross border science. This would be a good idea all around for everyone, and worth what we have been raising money for.

Carol: ACTION ITEM: I can help you with the Mexican professors and their bios.

Phil: When Hiram and Horacio were here a few weeks ago, I mentioned this just as a potential. Horacio responded that they had just been to something similar in Sonora. If you are doing a hybrid meeting, we can do a half day workshop on bird conservation issues in northwestern Mexico. I didn’t encourage him too much in that regard, but there is enthusiasm on their side for doing something like this.
Shaun: The 5K donation we received was for general use and there were multiple $500 donations for scholarships.

Robin: I talked to Ed Pandofino about some ideas for raising money for the Conference. ACTION ITEM: My suggestion was to get the business concerns in the local area, where we were holding the conference, to kick in some money on the grounds that we are bringing about 200 people to their city. My idea was to pigeonhole that money for the students. Ed said to me the easiest thing to do is to raise money for scholarships. Therefore, if we put the word out when we list all our accomplishments, we should say give us some money for students for scholarships.

This weekend I went down to SoCal to do a bird walk with LA Birders, a wonderful bird club. They had some young kids. ACTION ITEM: I told a father that WFO has scholarships for students to attend our conferences. I encourage all of us to have a membership form with us when we walk around and meet a young birder. We had a party of 13 people, and I was spreading the word about WFO. We are all responsible as Board members to do this.

Phil: The budget I sent to Shaun included travel costs. From Ensenada to the hotel is about $50 if you take the ABC bus. Flying from La Paz is a little less than $200 to get to Tijuana on Volarez.

Shaun: ACTION ITEM: It sounds like Carol, me, Phil, and Jessica are on the hook for this part of the planning.

Robert: Phil, for how many are you proposing scholarships?

Phil: The number of scholarships that we offer is completely open. It could be as low as 1 if it is only Hiram, but we might have 5 or more. That is a question to raise with the professors, Horacio de la Cueva, Gorgonio Ruiz-Campos and Roberto Carmona, a professor at UABCS in La Paz. If I were to guess, how many might be interested, I think it would be great to offer 5. But if it is less than that I would still be happy. The budget would be $1000 for someone coming from Ensenada, and $1200 for someone coming from La Paz.

Shaun: I rounded it up to $1500/person, so about 10K is what we must raise.

John H.: ACTION ITEM: What needs to happen to determine if we are going to do the Birdathon or not in the spring, is to put my head together with Shaun and develop a tasks list. I think people are hesitant because nobody understands what is involved in it, except Robin. A lot of work has been done in the past two years that won’t have to be repeated, as there are some processes in place, so it wouldn’t be reinventing the wheel. Maybe we can come up with a task list and envision a way that a small committee could do it.

Shaun: I must shout out to Dave Shuford. He did his own Birdathon on behalf of WFO this past spring and raised almost 4K, all on his own time. I think he would be an enthusiastic Birdathon Coordinator.

Dan R.: ACTION ITEM: Debbie, Jessica and I are working on a Call for Abstracts, and we’ll get that in motion. Based on timelines for previous conferences, we’ll start that about 6-months out, in the spring.

Jon D.: If we bring 5 Mexican scholars does that come out of the Special Fund and not the Scholarship committee? For the papers they present, would there be simultaneous translators, or
would the presentations be in English, or Spanish? And we should let the folks know for fundraising how the talks would be presented. If we fundraise for it, we need to be transparent.

**Phil.** The people we have in mind have varying levels of English fluency. One thing Kimball brought up in a previous meeting is, if you are doing a PowerPoint presentation, as long the slides have both languages on it, the spoken language isn’t nearly so important. Here at the museum, we have a translation committee, a bilingual staff, and it would be quite feasible to recruit staff who could do simultaneous translation. I know Horacio will tell Hiram that speaking in English at a conference is something that he should be doing. I remember Horacio saying to me a couple years ago that Hiram needs to learn to think in English. For Mexican scientists, English fluency is considered important, even though not all of them have it.

**6:20pm**  
**PUBLICATIONS**

**Dan R.: Update:** I’m mostly going to let others speak. Phil will speak to **WB**; Shaun will discuss *Birds of Inyo*. If Bob Gill were he, he would speak on our *Studies of Western Birds* series. I know he is still working with David Leatherman on a collection of *What Birds Eat*, a collection of his fabulous essays from Colorado Field Ornithologists. There is *The Birds of Pribilof Islands*, still in the works. Bob Gill said that Dan Gibson is suggesting that this might be better fodder for a stand-alone issue of **WB**. I’m hoping to see both Bob Gill and Dan Gibson next week at a conference where I’ll get more updates on this.

**Phil.** I circulated a progress report on **WB** today. We published Vol. 54(4) on the 15th of November 2023 and 4 articles for Vol. 55(1) are already accepted; we are awaiting revisions of 7 manuscripts that have been reviewed and gone to the authors; 6 manuscripts are still in review. We have received 27 manuscripts this year, and if we don’t get any more, then this will be the lowest number submitted in the last 12 years which is a bit alarming to me. It’s a glitch or something we really need to work at, probably is the latter. **ACTION ITEM:** At every meeting I say, do encourage collaborators to contribute. I’ll reiterate that even more strongly this time. We are kind of delinquent on receiving a report from the California Bird Records Committee(CBRC), so any of you who have connections there, allow me to jerk that chain a little bit.

**Shaun:** The California Bird Records Committee(CBRC) said they were going to do two years’ worth of their budget this year.

**Teodelina:** I am pleased to say that my library, the Claremont Colleges Library, does carry **WB**. During the last academic year every time I went to the library, I’d look at it and leave it lying around. They measure reading by how many times they put it back on the shelf.

**Shaun:** Teodelina that’s a good point. We have about 45 institutions around the world that receive **WB**, a university in Beijing, a university in Paris, a university in Britain, and in Austria, several museums. We have a wide distribution. **ACTION ITEM:** Shaun keeps threatening to write an article for the Newsletter about the distribution because its super interesting.

**Jon D.:** Two of our founders live in Brussels, but they are not members; Brussels should carry it.

**6:16pm**  
**Shaun:** With the *Inyo* book a shout out goes to Jon D. for his help with the early distribution of the book. It’s amazing how the book caught a lot of energies. Initially we produced 200 copies, and all 200 were sold by the end of October 2023. We have 75 copies of the second 200 printing that are already spoken for. The sales have been brisk. Three organizations have bought most of the books, and we have many individual buyers. Spellbinder Books has placed another order for 50, Mono
Lake Committee ordered a carton, and Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association ordered 12 and Jeff shared with me that they want to order more. 120 books were sold online. After some distribution problems, I finalized with a fulfillment house in L.A. John and Dan R. reviewed the contract. All our publications are now with them, including current copies of *WB*. I send the order in, and it gets fulfilled the next day. We are going to see a cost savings from that, and an efficiency savings too. I’ve been sending out a note saying to the people who ordered, “Please bear with us while we are in this transition.” Most people have been supportive of that. I’m excited about how well the book has done, and Jon D., thanks again for your support on getting word out on the book.

**Jon D.:** The second printing includes an index. For anyone interested, you should know the linear sequence of families, but just in case, there now is an index. The *Birds of Inyo* has a half million data entries. When we fund raise or do publicity, it’s one of the proudest things, (our publications), that WFO does, and has always done. It should be kept in mind whenever we promote WFO. Nancy Overholtz did the cover art which should also be kept in mind for fund raising or promoting the organization.

**Shaun:** I know we gave a stipend to both of Jo’s children for their support. Matt, the son, was very generous and he donated his stipend back to WFO and became a WFO member. That was very, very kind. From a publication’s perspective, the funding we have gotten is going for scholarships, but I had some specific checks written because of the *Inyo* book.

**Robin:** **ACTION ITEM:** Jon D., do you think we should try to get the book reviewed by ABA? Maybe that way we could publicize it to ABA members. ABA members can get a discount by buying their books there.

**Jon D.:** **ACTION ITEM:** I can reach out to Allan Hale at Buteo Books and mention the book. It would be a 40% discount to a book dealer. Sell it as widely as possible. Let’s explore getting more PR for this.

**Jon D.:** You don’t know this within the Board, but Tom (Heindel) died literally a month or so before the book came out. He was on his death bed, and they showed him the cover in Reno at the hospital. The doctor said, “I want to see the cover.” The doctor was shown the cover by Jo, Tom’s wife and coauthor, and the doctor said, “That’s a Western Tanager – That’s the most beautiful bird I ever saw!” And then Tom shouted out from his death bed, “That man gets a free book!” The doctor then eased him on the way out and Tom died within the hour. That’s quite a touching story. Whenever the shipments of books come in, I pick them up, and take them down to Jo in Big Pine. She has something she signs in every book. Birding can make you happy, and all the bookstores here want Jo to sign the book. She has a whole table with her memorial to her husband set up where she enthusiastically signs the books. I have a lot of personal history in this and that makes me all the happier that WFO published it.

**Phil:** I was glad we could convert the obituary for Tom that we published in this last issue of *WB* into an advertisement as well.

**Jon D.:** Thanks Phil.

6:27pm

**STUDENT PROGRAMS**

**Teodelina:** I have a few points summarized. At the Conference some of the ideas that we came up with included a mentor/mentee program that has yet to be developed. It was Teresa’s idea to create some an online network of members as an outreach for potential members and existing
members outside of California. My college had a database for alumni. I'm sure that is useful. Say if you are moving to Seattle for a job after graduation, you can find alumni or if you want to move to Seattle and don’t have a job or contacts, you have a way of searching other Sagehens (alumni), in the area. For that, we would have to find out what kind of software they are using, if we want to go forward with this. Of course there are questions of privacy. You may want to be a member, but not want to be contacted in this way. This might make things a little more complicated. There may be better ways to opt out or opt in. **ACTION ITEM:** For my part I can go and see if anybody at Pomona knows how this works. The idea is a database for members, and branching off that, a mentor/mentee program for younger students coming in, or a student who cannot go to a conference and wants to get some advice from birders who have more experience. There is a program that I’m taking part of now, that is for biology, where you get assigned according to a basic plan of your interests, to a person who has expressed interest in being a mentor in this program. About every year and a half, I meet with this person who is someone in the field of biology. A program for WFO might be more specific for birders.

**John H.:** When people go into ornithology, they may end up in a variety of different careers. In my graduate program, a lot of people ended up going into environmental consulting, several people ended up with a variety of government agencies, some in nonprofits, some in academia. So, it might be of varying usefulness depending on where the student is on their trajectory. To have mentors that represent different areas and different applications of ornithology would be useful. In the Wildlife Society, we had an activity at the conference, a lunchtime session for students where there would be people at each table that represented different kinds of working environments and things and students could go and talk to them over lunch.

**Robin:** A database can be a useful conduit for WFO members. **ACTION ITEM:** All the scholarship kids should be asked if they would like to participate in this database so they could continue their relationships that they had when they were scholarship kids.

**Teodelina:** It may feel slightly less invasive than having all the members being placed into a database, although that may still be a viable idea. As a student coming in and winning a scholarship, you are into that kind of thing. You come in already prepared, or at least expecting this mentor/mentee relationship that is somewhat available, to place your name in a database where you may reciprocate in the future, I think that is a very reasonable ask.

**Jon D.:** I’m curious as to what your student advisors say on this issue. **ACTION ITEM:** Do you see, during a conference, having a meet and greet of potential mentors and mentees? There needs to be a way to introduce potential WFO mentors to kids that are interested in having mentors.

**Teodelina:** **ACTION ITEM:** It reminds me of my first conference in San Diego, you did a dinner with the scholarship kids. That conference was pretty much life changing. People on the Board were reaching out to scholarship recipients which made it that way. That dinner stood out in my mind, because we were having conversations with people who we admired in different ways, and maybe some who were in their trajectory. There is already a good setup for that to maybe format it into the conference.

**Robin:** **ACTION ITEM:** I know Teresa wants this mentoring, as we talked about a database for all the scholarship people so they can maintain contact and tell us what kind of jobs they got. I found it very helpful to provide jobs for the kids when they are in school and in between, summer vacations, etc. I think some of our members could facilitate that kind of
thing. Students need money, they need some way of improving their CVs. All these things need to be supported.

(Teresa’s audio is still not working to communicate with our zoom group.)

Robin: Do you think using What's App, since I know Facebook isn't being used by the youth, would generate interest in finding out who would be interested in being on the database?

Teodelina: **ACTION ITEM:** Another point in the outreach part, is developing a Slack channel for the young and younger birders. I’m not sure what the progress is on that right now. I had a feeling that the Board felt there was some uncertainty on how to manage a large Slack channel. To be fair, I don't have all the answers either.

John H.: I've been on different Slack working groups. One was for eBird reviewers, and I confess I haven't used it a whole lot. Alvaro Jaramillo has developed his own kind of Slack space for putting discussion groups related to online classes that he done, etc. **ACTION ITEM:** I'm sure Alvaro would be glad to consult with you about Slack.

Teodelina: **ACTION ITEM:** I will reach out to Alvaro and figure out what his experience is and how he moderates his Slack group. The Discord group is more informal, and as such it can get rowdy in there. Memes are good, but things start going on and it will be an interesting question. There are going to be young birders in there, different opinions and conversations going on. Well, it will be great if we can have that and find a good way to manage conversations. The network to do that though might be through Slack but it's a good question how quickly we can get that up. Do we want to start a data base before Slack? I don't know about you guys; we have a few months before the next conference. It doesn’t seem to be something that has to be developed in the next two months. It seems to me we can ask research Slack and ask other questions once we get Slack going.

Teodelina: **ACTION ITEM:** I will contact John Garrett, a former WFO Board member, and who is familiar with Slack

Teodelina: **ACTION ITEM:** Finally, there is the idea of summer camp for the youth that has been discussed. This is something that will potentially be in 2025. We are basing the summer camp in Ventura. This will be aimed particularly at those members who could not make it to the conference because school schedules.

6:45pm  **NEW BUSINESS**

Jon D.: We talked about having a financial report or year-end report in some capacity. Are there plans for that? We are in great financial shape, but I like transparency to the members.

John H.: We decided to do this Giving Tuesday push, and because of that, I didn’t want to send out another letter in December. In the Winter Newsletter, which will probably come out in January or February, we would do an overview of the year and our financial position, something we did last year, only it will be a little bit latter.

Robin: Jon D. and I were birding in SoCal recently, and we met with LA Birders organization and some kids that were from various university bird clubs. If Phil knows of universities in the San Diego area that have student bird clubs that would be great because we want to publicize to the students in the bird clubs about scholarships, etc. **ACTION ITEM:** Of all the universities that I've
contacted so far, only one did not have a bird club. Search for it in Google. Please funnel the information to Maci. Then we will get out a letter telling them, maybe sometime in January, what are our plans to increase youth membership.

Phil: Both SDSU and UCSD have a natural history club, not a bird club. Both come to the museum to do tours here, so I have those contacts.

Robin: UC Davis, UCLA, Cal Berkely, and Stanford, all have individual bird clubs led by professors that go out on field trips.

Motion to adjourn made by Don M., seconded by Carol, and passed unanimously.

6:49pm John H.: Thank you everybody.