



Western Chapter International Society of Arboriculture

Board Meeting

WCA Office, Sacramento, CA

Thursday, July 17, 2025 – 12:00PM – 5:00PM

Friday, July 18, 2025 – 8:00AM – 1:00PM

Thursday, July 17, 2025 – 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM

12:35 PM - Convene Meeting – Tracey Takeuchi, President

Roll Call & Anti-Trust Statement

- **Present, in person:** Tracey Takeuchi, President; Julia Gowin, President Elect; Sarah Maitland, Past President; Rhonda Wood, ISA Council Representative; John Crandell, Director; Alison Lancaster, Director; Brandon Elrod, Director; Gordon Matassa, Director; Rose Epperson, Executive Director; Kathleen Falamino, Staff; Walt Warriner, Finance chair; Doug Anderson, Britton Fund Chair; Jeff Spohn, Treasurer; Wister Dorta, Spanish co-chair; Josh Gevertz, Education co-chair; Igor Lacan, Education co-chair; Linda Chalker-Scott, Editor; Madeleine Rauhe, Students chair; Erik Mauel, Membership chair; Beverly Babb, Marketing chair; Sarah Santee, Women in Arboriculture chair
- **Present, remote (not all present for entire meeting):** Elizabeth Lanham, Pride Network Chair; Jonathan Flournoy, Secretary; Terri-Ann Koike, Credentialing chair; John Leffingwell, TREE Fund chair; Grayson Keating, Annual Meeting 2026 co-chair; Tim Womick, Annual Meeting 2026 co-chair; Ryan Gilpin, Tree Care for Wildlife chair; John Leffingwell, TREE Fund chair; Ian Campbell, Commercial chair

Action Items

- Consider a motion to approve the Meeting Agenda
 - Julia Gowin motions to approve the meeting agenda. Gordon Matassa seconds. Motion carried with no opposition.
- Consider a motion to approve the consent agenda (written reports). Alison Lancaster motions to approve the consent agenda. Rhonda Wood seconds. Motion carried with no opposition.
- Consider a motion to approve the April 4, 2025, Meeting Minutes
 - Julia Gowin motions to approve the April 4, 2025 meeting minutes. Rhonda Wood seconds.
 - Discussion: Tracey Takeuchi said that there was one place where the meeting minutes mistakenly have “suit” instead of “suite”.
 - Motion carried with no opposition.

Officer Reports

- President’s Welcome – Presented by Tracey Takeuchi
 - Tracey Takeuchi: My goals are primarily to continue work in equity and inclusion, and to continue to provide for scientifically sound research and advice. I am looking to support our new members and new people in the industry, and to promote mentorship.
- Treasurer’s Report – See report, summarized by Jeff Spohn
 - Jeff Spohn: we continue to be in a healthy financial position. Our investments continue to be stable. We are remaining consistent year to year, at least in this quarter. TPAQ and TRAQ continue to be active, in demand, and a good source of revenue. There are 2 items up for discussion, the Britton Fund dollars supporting the Harris Scholarship, and to review and approve the 2025-2026 budget.
 - Discussion: the Britton Fund has a scholarship in Richard Harris’s name that gives \$2,500, which WCISA used to match. We are talking about doing those matching



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contributions again. This item is actually in the budget already, but we need a motion to release those funds each year.

- Julia Gowin motions to provide \$2,500 on September 30th to match the Britton Fund Scholarship each year. Rhonda Wood seconds.
 - Amended motion: Julia Gowin revises her motion to have Rose do what she needs to send \$2,500 to the Harris Scholarship on September 30 each year. Rhonda Wood seconds the amended motion. Motion carried without opposition.
- 2025/26 Draft Budget, presented by Rose Epperson
 - Rose Epperson: We make the budget by comparing last year's budget with anticipated costs, growth, and special funding requests. The 2024/2025 conference ran just about even. However, the lack of forest service funding was noticeable and caused us to end up a little short.
 - Regarding the budget for attending the ISA conference in New Zealand, we will use our airline miles wherever possible.
 - We will have a higher marketing budget in future years.
 - Prescriptive pruning workshops have generally had net positive income.
 - TRAQ stayed the same in terms of income and expenses, mostly because we're already working at capacity.
 - Any changes here will be brought to the board.
 - We are always conservative when estimating investment income, but it usually ends up being much higher than the budgeted amount.
 - Discussion: Someone asked if anyone who wants to know more about chapter finances can attend a Finance Committee meeting? Rose said yes, and the meeting is on the Monday before a board meeting.
 - Alison Lancaster motions to approve both the treasurer's report and the 2025/2026 draft budget. Julia Gowin seconds. Motion carried without opposition.
- Finance Committee Update – See report, presented by Walt Warriner
 - Walt Warriner: the market value of the chapter investment portfolio is \$721k at end of 2nd quarter 2025, which is more than \$668k in 4th quarter 2024. The chapter continues to contribute \$5,000 per month into the money market account. It was not invested, as we decided to pause investments at the last board meeting. Now, \$25,000 has been contributed to the money market account. The Finance Committee recommends investing the \$25,000 in the money market account into bonds.
 - Discussion: do we need to revise the previous motion pausing investments?
 - Alison Lancaster motions to approve the Financial Committee's recommendations to invest the \$25,000 in the money market account into bonds, and to invest the regular monthly contributions to bonds over the next quarter, and to then review market conditions at the time of the next board meeting. Sarah Maitland seconds. Motion carried with no opposition.
 - Additional discussion: it may be good to get Francine Lai to come to an in-person board meeting.



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Strategic Committee Reports

- **Membership** – See report, presented by Erik Mauel
 - The Membership Committee meets monthly. Their main goals are to engage non-member arborists, which are certified arborists who are not yet members of the chapter. They are working on a survey to ask non-members why they aren't members.
 - They are also working on retaining and engaging tenured arborists. They are raffling off swag, including keychains, mousepads, tumblers, etc. Their raffle at the conference was a success, although some people had trouble hearing them announce winners. Member profiles in Western Arborist are going well. Member selection for the profiles is on a rotating basis of different regions of the Western Chapter.
 - Discussion: do we make sure we don't just select consulting types for the articles? Answer: yes, they choose a variety of professions.
 - Discussion: should we advertise WCISA at Certified Arborist exams? It could be a conflict, but we could put out promotional material outside of the exam rooms. Erik Mauel said they were actually working on "sample" Western Arborist articles to give out to people. Someone proposed putting out a CEU article, but saying that if you want the CEUs from the article, you will have to join WCISA.
- **Students** – See report, presented by Madeleine Rauhe
 - Their consistent monthly meetings are moving to bimonthly in October. They are doing outreach at Girl Scouts, career fairs, etc. They are also reaching out to 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities.
 - Madeleine Rauhe requests an additional \$2,000 to help cover travel and promotion-related items to help the committee attend career fairs and other outreach.
 - Tracey Takeuchi: it's hard to reach students with the ways that she's been trying.
 - Rose Epperson: we have just approved the budget, so we would need to revise the budget to add that in. But the committee does have a \$3,500 budget.
- **Marketing** – See report, presented by Beverly Babb
 - Tree Trivia posts get a lot of community engagement. They have a year's worth of posts lined up and ready.
 - They're working on social media posts, and flyers to hand out at regional events. Each marketing committee member agrees to do 2 events in their area. The flyers are meant to be prepared right before events so they can see how they perform and make adjustments for the next event.
 - They're looking at their video budget, especially since Search Engine Optimization prioritizes video. They're creating short-form scripts for video shorts and reels. They also have a YouTube channel.
 - They're looking to see how to use the vast video library they already have. They want to identify resources and provide a repository of links. Everyone is encouraged to provide B-roll.
 - They are here to support all committees in their endeavors.
- **TREE Fund** – see report, presented by John Leffingwell
 - The big news is that John Leffingwell is moving off the committee, to be replaced by Greg Mink.



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- They are trying to raise awareness of the TREE Fund and help people differentiate it from the Britton Fund—a lot of people still get confused. They have booths at WCISA annual meetings and are writing articles for Western Arborist.
 - The board has approved \$2,500 for Western Chapter riders, but they don't have Western Chapter riders for the 2025 Tour des Trees. But he's ok with the money just going directly to the TREE Fund.
 - Rose Epperson wanted to remind the board that while we choose to put the \$2,500 toward our riders, we are still at the lowest donation/support level for the TREE Fund.
- Britton Fund – see report, presented by John Crandell
 - John wants to encourage all members of WCISA to donate to the Britton Fund. They also encourage people to join the Britton Fund Ride.
 - They awarded a grant to Dr. Joanna Solins to continue her work on the Climate-Ready Trees study.
- Credentialing – see report, presented by Terri-Ann Koike
 - They meet quarterly. Gordon wrote the fall magazine article. They try to get an article in each magazine.
 - They will be emailing certified tree climber credential holders to become evaluators for the exams.
 - Discussion: is there any description of responsibilities written up for potential evaluators? Also, the aerial rescue component can be a bottleneck and a challenge to get signed off.
- Education – presented by Josh Gevertz
 - Their meetings have gotten more frequent, now once per month. A big recent change is a shared calendar to view future programming, and programming ideas.
 - Working with other committees has been very productive for creating workshops.
 - Igor Lacan: if you have a theme for webinars that you'd like us to work on in the next calendar year, please let us know.
- Tree Climbing Championship –presented by Rose Epperson
 - They had a great TCC in Sacramento this year. They partnered with Sacramento Parks, so the facilities were free. Our champions remain the same as last year and will be going to the competition in New Zealand.
- Annual Meeting 2025 –presented by Rose Epperson
 - We were a little in the red (more expenses than revenue) this year from the conference. Some outside funding for the event went to scholarships.
 - We try to make the conference affordable for attendants, especially considering how much hotels can cost, but we also need to recover our expenses.
 - Walt Warriner encouraged courting conference sponsors to make up costs.
- Commercial – Presented by Ian Campbell
 - There is lack of movement or progress in the committee, although some members are very consistent about showing up.
 - Discussion: Should we reframe what the Commercial Committee does? What is the mission statement?
 - Ian Campbell: we were trying to focus on creating a commercial BMP for tree care, focused on the Western Chapter.



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- Ian Campbell: fundamentally, should there even be a commercial arborist committee? What is a commercial arborist these days?
 - Rose Epperson: there still is still a commercial arborist role in this industry currently.
 - Maybe looking at the mission statement will be helpful.
 - Someone suggested Commercial Committee members attend a Municipal Committee meeting to see how they structure their meetings. It is very educational for committee chairs to attend other committees' meetings.
 - Someone suggested to make the committee a conversational space, and then see what needs and ideas come out from there.
- Consulting – see report, presented by Jonathan Flournoy, board liaison
 - The board is productive, publishing numerous Western Arborist articles and providing various educational programs. We have been trying to host one full-day workshop per year in various locations and have an upcoming one on level 3 risk assessments. Many articles are also in the pipeline for the future. We continue to host roundtables.
- Municipal – see report, presented by Alison Lancaster, board liaison
 - Alison Lancaster: in our meetings, people come in with their own questions which then leads to interesting discussion and eventually articles or other products.
- Spanish – presented by Wister Dorta
 - They were trying to get chapter members to join Arboleros. They are fundraising for Arboleros. They're up to 400 Instagram followers and 21 registered members.
 - They are attending many events and hosting educational events. They hosted an event in Costa Mesa and was able to fund it through sponsors. They are also doing outreach in other countries like Spain, Colombia, and Mexico.
 - They are expanding their offerings by creating an educational video series.
- Women in Arboriculture – presented by Sarah Santee, Acting Chair pending approval
 - They've had 2 meetings so far. The members have the same viewpoint of what the committee will be. They have a climbing workshop coming up, are working on an aerial rescue workshop, and other events.
- Tree Care for Wildlife – see report, presented by Ryan Gilpin
 - Ryan Gilpin: Josh Gevertz put on a neat workshop at Cypress Lawn Arboretum in Colma, CA. They have a nest building article coming up in Western Arborist Magazine.
 - The Arizona Community Tree Council is planning a wildlife workshop.
 - They are continuing to work on the Wildlife Habitat Snag Sign. It will have a QR code that links to helpful information.
- PRIDE Network – see report, presented by Gordon Matassa
 - They had a small but successful event at the Western Chapter conference. Currently the committee is California-heavy, and they are looking for representatives from other Western Chapter states.
- Last agenda item: the board wanted to recognize Rose Epperson for serving the Western Chapter for 20 years. The board presented a video and extended a big "thank you" to Rose.

4:50 PM Adjourn



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8:05AM: Convene Meeting – Tracey Takeuchi, President

Roll Call & Anti-Trust Statement

- **Present, in person:** Tracey Takeuchi, President; Julia Gowin, President Elect; Sarah Maitland, Past President; Rhonda Wood, ISA Council Representative; John Crandell, Director; Alison Lancaster, Director; Brandon Elrod, Director; Gordon Matassa, Director; Rose Epperson, Executive Director; Kathleen Falamino, Staff; Jeff Spohn, Treasurer (left at 10:58am); Linda Chalker-Scott, Editor; Madeleine Rauhe, Students chair; Erik Mauel, Membership chair; Beverly Babb, Marketing chair; Sarah Santee, Women in Arboriculture chair
- **Present, remote (not all present for entire meeting):** Kari Hines, Texas ISA; Kevin Eckert; Jonathan Flournoy, Secretary; Terri-Ann Koike, Credentialing chair

Officer Reports

- **Executive Director's Report** – See submitted report, summarized by Rose Epperson
 - Rose Epperson: One thing they notice about membership is that it varies day to day. 3,825 is our rolling total.
 - They used to run out of money slowly through the year, but now that they have rolling enrollments, the money is more steady and easier to manage.
 - Many people who leave the chapter end up renewing.
 - Geographic distribution of members is still pretty much the same.
 - TRAQ members have increased tremendously. This is driven a lot by PG&E.
 - Revenue looks a bit low right now, but that is because a bunch of outside funds have not come in yet.
 - Social media posts increase around the conference but decrease in the summer because people take time off.
 - New and upcoming products include Digital Tree Inventories BMP 3rd edition, CODIT Principle 2nd edition, and Spanish Practice Exams.
 - ISA gives us membership statistics from their system and asks us to set goals and key initiatives. Our key initiatives are straight from our strategic plan. We also provide the ISA with what we spend our money on. ISA provides us with \$300k for our Certified Arborist exams, of which we use \$236k to maintain the credential and a couple of other uses, so there is a net surplus. We also have a quarterly call with the ISA's program manager.
 - Questions: is PG&E open to sponsorships? Rose Epperson: it's difficult and the event needs to be in their service area.
- **Component Council Representative Update** – Presented by Rhonda Wood
 - Rhonda Wood: I did not submit a formal report, because it would have just said there was no activity. There was an online meeting earlier this year, but since then there hasn't been much activity. They have set up the Microsoft Teams site but the last posting was in March, which was a reminder to nominate people for the ISA board.
 - ISA may just be very preoccupied with other changes happening in the organization of bringing customer service in-house.
 - Future meetings will be scheduled only by CCRs and held exclusively among them.



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- Editor's Report – See report, presented by Linda Chalker-Scott
 - Linda Chalker-Scott: This is my 6th year of being editor. I reviewed the mission statement of the Editorial Committee to see how they could best help the magazine. The committee's mission is not to help me with editing and proofreading, but instead to identify topics, recruit potential authors, encourage engagement with the magazine. I wanted to focus on how to get people to engage with the magazine more since many people don't read it front to back.
 - If you have a topic you'd really like to see in the magazine, let us know and we can try to find authors for it.
 - Discussion: to create an article database, there's a lot more work than just uploading the PDFs. You'll need to create tags and keywords to make the articles searchable. Then, making these articles open ONLY to members is an additional process.
 - Maybe it makes sense to charge for access to these articles.
 - Also, what if the article authors don't want their work to be searchable? Again, there's more to this than simply uploading a PDF.
 - Discussion: can there be guidance for how to take magazine-appropriate photographs? In addition to just a text explanation can we have an annotated example of a good photo?

Old Business

- P&P Manual Update
 - Rose Epperson: Kathleen Falamino and her went through the many comments that were left on the document. A draft has just been sent to the legal department.
 - The board went through some comments on the document.
 - This new P&P manual is a combination of our annual bylaws and our existing P&P. We were trying not to lose the detail in our bylaws. Some bylaws were split into pieces and put into different sections of the new P&P.

New Business

- Wildfire Risk Reduction Qualification (WRRQ) – Presentation from Kari Hines from Texas A&M Forest Service
 - Kari Hines: this qualification was modeled off an existing one. It's a 2-day class that's meant to provide a basic level of understanding to Certified Arborists on the concepts of the ignition zone and community wildfire preparedness. Certified Arborists generally don't arrive with much wildfire background.
 - Day 1 covers the background of fire ecology and how fires burn in the landscapes the attending arborists are working in.
 - The rest of day 1 and then day 2 consist of risk reduction recommendations and how to communicate them.
 - The class is made to be very locally specific and is slightly different depending on where it's held. For that reason, it might not be picked up and standardized by ISA. In Texas, it has been very local to...Texas.
 - Texas ISA is not asking for anything for Western Chapter to use this class. California and the Western Chapter already have many people working on these subjects.



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- She does NOT want information in the class to contradict what local fire experts are already saying. That's why they modify the content depending on the local region, especially local BMPs and laws.
- Discussion:
 - Rose Epperson: What happens after someone goes through the course?
 - Kari Hines: the chapter hosting the event would present the list of attendees. They have set the renewal timeline for 5 years and are now just starting to do renewal courses. The course is challenging to teach online due to numerous in-person exercises.
 - Rose Epperson: what's the project timeline, from creation of the course to holding classes?
 - Kari Hines: the hard part is already done, and the course materials can be provided quickly. However, we'll need to modify the class for local conditions and maybe this can be done in a couple of weeks. We try to find field sites that are relatively "natural" and have homes to do assessments on. It may take a couple of months to find appropriate field sites.
 - Kari Hines: they've capped their events to 25 people with 3 instructors because the testing out is a bit complicated. We try to do an exit test where participants talk to a pretend client and are forced to use the terms they learned in the course. The exit test is more complicated than a simple multiple-choice exam.
- Kari Hines: this course is to help people reduce risk, not to prevent all fire damage. The course looks at local fire history, fire suppression in the US, prescribed fires, and how fires impact ecosystems. There is fire ecology and physics which are the basics of how fires move through the landscape. We discuss Home Ignition Zones (HIZ) and do an outside walkthrough around a structure. Regulations and resources (endangered species, local tree ordinances, wildlife, etc.) are also discussed. This is followed up by a written test and a verbal exit test of a risk assessment and mitigation plan.
- Julia Gowin: it sounds like the class focuses on the wildland-urban interface (WUI).
 - Kari Hines: the concepts remain the same depending on what kind of WUI you're in. It's the structure itself and the first 5 feet around it that make or break the structure's fire outcome. Most arborists focus on protecting urban trees, but these trees usually burn in urban environments because the structures are burning. So, arborists would need to learn more about protecting the structures themselves, which can be an unfamiliar concept to many.
- Kari Hines: 3 main skillsets should be represented by the main instructors. These instructors should be highly skilled and experts in: 1. community wildfire preparedness, 2. wildfire response, 3. a certified arborist or someone that comes from an arboricultural background. In Texas, many instructors have come from state forestry agencies.
- Rose Epperson: our next steps would be to work on this, and bring it back to the board in October with an outline of the course and costs.
- Board Housekeeping
 - We have the following people nominated for committee chair positions:



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- Ryan Korpela for Utility Committee
- Sarah Santee for Women in Arboriculture
- Greg Mink for TREE Fund
- Julia Gowin motions to approve the 3 new committee chairs listed above and to reaffirm the existing committee chairs. Rhonda Wood seconds. Motion carried without opposition.
- Committee Liaison Updates 2025-2026
 - We updated the board liaisons for various committees for the following year.

12:45 PM ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Flournoy, Board Secretary
August 13, 2025