

Chum Line



Good Sportsmanship is Worth More Than all the Fish in the Ocean

MAY 2025

LARRC DINNER MEETING

LARRC WELCOMES BENJIE KIM

Benjie has been fishing the California coast for over 10 years and has been growing his YouTube channel of over 30k subscribers for the past 5 years. His passion is to help newer fishermen catch more fish and focuses on creating educational fishing "how-to" content on his social media platforms. He loves halibut fishing with the Lucky Craft Flash Minnow but his favorite way to surf fish might still be sight fishing big corbina in ultra skinny water. Benjie is a pro-staff for Okuma and while known for surf fishing, also enjoys fishing from sport boats in the Summer and trout fishing in the winter at local ponds.



Dinner Meeting May 19, 2025

Social Hour 6:30pm Dinner and Meeting 7:00pm
Caruso's • 10152 Balboa Blvd. • Granada Hills, CA 91344

What's On My Mind

By John Ballotti

Participation



I began this year with the goal of making participation the focus for 2025. Judging by the club member involvement in the Lou Berke Trout / Catfish Derby on May 9, you listened and delivered. Supporting the nearly 100 special needs children who attended the event, nearly 50 club members along with another over 50 family members, friends, and associates came together to give the kids' a day of fun in the sun catching many catfish each along with eating the delicious food cooked up by **Calabasas Custom Catering** and served with a smile by our helpful volunteers. Thank you, **Paul Varenchik**. That adds up to over 200 at the event. Even the heat couldn't stop us. Pop-ups were placed along the shoreline to allow those in wheelchairs to fish in the shade. And fish they did. An event of this magnitude requires extensive preparation over many months. As you would expect, there were highs and lows. Feelings ranged from "OMG we are never going to pull this off" to "I think this is going to work." Shouldering through it all were a cohort of volunteers who stepped up, stepped out, and succeeded. **Ted Feit** and **Carol Chow** led this year's event. Long before the event, they coordinated with the city and schools and set in motion the series of actions that needed to be taken. Let's not forget the man behind the curtain, **Steve Simon**. Steve was here, there, and everywhere at once. Working tirelessly, Steve insured that everything was in place to give the kids' a happy experience from helping put the net in, arriving early to meet the fish truck to make sure the fish were put in the net area, coordinating the setup of the event, to pulling and storing the net at the end of the day. Thank you, Steve.

Next up for the kids are two Mentors' trips and the granddaddy of all our events, the Annual Kids' Trip on July 7. Let's keep the momentum going and fill all the volunteer slots.

CALENDAR

Board Meeting

May 12, 2025

Via Zoom • 7pm

Please email the Club President for link information if you would like to attend the Board Meeting.

Dinner Meeting

May 19, 2025

Caruso's

10152 Balboa Blvd. • Granada Hills, CA 91344

(In the North Hills Shopping Center)

Social Hour - 6:30pm Dinner & Meeting 7:00pm

Navegante - 1.5 day

June 2nd -4th, 2025

Marine Mentor ~ Betty-O

June 9, 2025

Twilight Trip ~ Betty-O

June 21, 2025

Marine Mentor ~ Betty-O

June 24, 2025

Annual Kids' Trip

July 7, 2025

Long Beach Sportfishing

King of the Club

Navengante

July 24, 2025

Navengante - 1.5 day

October 28-30, 2025

4 OPEN Positions

We would appreciate your help. There are currently four open positions to chair the following committees:

Apparel • Elections • Public Relations
Tackle Management - Maintenance

Let John Ballotti (johnballottil@gmail.com) know if you are interested in or have any questions about these committees

CONSERVATION MATTERS

Reprinted from Wild Oceans *Horizon*

Rooting for the Return of Bluefin

A Decade of Conservation Restores Pacific Bluefin Tuna

By Theresa Labriola

By the time I started fishing in Rhode Island waters, the golden age of sportfishing had passed. We had squandered the ocean that provided fish in seemingly endless abundance. The giants were extirpated from the coastal waters by the 1970s. The crowded waves of forage fish, of menhaden, herring, and butterfish were depleted. But, I still heard the tale of Kay Topping catching a giant bluefin tuna just a mile or two off of Watch Hill, RI. And, I still cast my line in search of my own stories.

A similar fate played out in the Pacific. In 1898 Charles Frederick Holder landed a 183 pound bluefin with a rod and reel and ushered sportfishing into California. Large bluefin tuna became the backbone of southern California sportfishing. Then, a surge in post WWII industrial commercial fishing squeezed the stock. Echoing the Atlantic, larger bluefin tuna were soon non-existent in California waters. By 2011, the spawning stock biomass shrunk to less than 3% of unfished levels.

Then, a historic rebound rewound the ocean 100years. Record Pacific bluefin recruitment in the mid-2010s led to bigger schools, then bigger fish. Californians began chasing and catching fabled bluefin measuring over 300 pounds. In 2021, California recorded a new state record bluefin weighing 395 pounds. Coastal waters frothed with bluefin once again leaving anglers and conservationists to wonder, how do we sustain this boom not only for today, but for future generations.

The only way to sustain the recovery of Pacific bluefin and recreational opportunity is to err on the side of conservation.

Pacific bluefin tuna recovery requires old-school sportsmanship. Charles Holder's historic catch led him to create the Tuna Club of Avalon with an aim to conserve ocean resources. Wild Oceans' founders carried this conservation ethic forward. Even as bluefin tuna return in numbers that surpass historical records, the fresh memory of the collapse reminds us that we need to coexist with the sea, sharing the resource with a myriad of other creatures and respecting its natural limits.

The Pacific bluefin tuna spawns in the western Pa-

cific. Some juveniles traverse the open ocean and spend several years feeding and maturing in the California Current until they return west to spawn. International fisheries managers began to place meaningful restrictions on the catch of bluefin tuna in 2014 and to restrict the industrial fishery that was targeting the smallest, youngest fish. Last year, scientists determined that the decade of conservation had restored the spawning stock biomasses from less than 3% of historic levels to more than 20%. In return, managers followed their basic instinct in natural resources management to set extraction at a level called maximum sustainable yield and increased commercial quota by about 50%, leading many to wonder "what comes next?"

This summer, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission and Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission are scheduled to adopt a long-term harvest strategy for Pacific bluefin tuna, an ecosystem approach to management that goes beyond basic instinct and considers and balances social, economic, ecological and institutional objectives. A harvest-strategy ends the cycle of valuing quota above all else. This presents us with an opportunity to prioritize safety, to minimize the probability that the stock will fall below the point in which fishing is no longer considered sustainable, and status, maintaining the stock in the "green zone" so that it is not overfished and there is no overfishing.

The harvest-strategy is not the end. Its success depends on our continued improved understanding of bluefin behavior and biology. Scientists have collected bluefin diet information to help determine whether and how forage availability aligns with recruitment and growth. Others have tagged eastern Pacific tuna to piece together the puzzle of Pacific bluefin growth and maturity and better understand what triggers their return to the west to spawn. These priorities become more important in the face of changing ocean conditions.

Fishing in southern California, just like fishing in Rhode Island, marks the local economy, it was, and still is, woven into the local life. Wild Oceans work to return Atlantic and Pacific bluefin tuna to our shores has brightened this cultural tapestry. We cannot change the past and the ways we strained the ocean, but everything we do can change the future.



THE NAVAGANTE IS 65 FEET LONG WITH A GENEROUS 20 FOOT BEAM. SHE HAS A 160 SCOOP BAIT TANK, SIDE SCAN RADAR, RSW HOLD TO KEEP YOUR CATCH SUPER FRESH. THIS IS A COMFORTABLE BOAT WITH A FINE GALLEY, MEALS ARE INCLUDED! THE BUNK ROOM HAS 24 COMFORTABLE BERTHS.

Dates: June 2nd (9pm) – June 4th (5am), 2025

Cost: \$455 for LARRC member, non-members \$470. Non-members please enquire.

- Note: A \$20 fuel surcharge, at this time, will be charged and paid individually per angler at the day of the trip to the boat directly.
- Snacks, drinks, tip and fish cleaning are an additional charge per angler.

Anglers: 17

Charter Master: Dustin House, cph_bass@yahoo.com | (714) 904-5789

Location: Redondo Beach Sportfishing, 140 International Boardwalk, Redondo Beach, CA 90277

Trip Description: Departs 9:00 pm, Monday, June 2nd, returns Wednesday, June 4th, early morning (approximately 3-5am). The target for the trip will be Tuna, Yellowtail, and/or other game fish at offshore fishing grounds. Redondo Beach is ideally located to go where the fish are. Your fare includes all meals. Tip is not included but is customary by each angler.

- Arrival is 2 hours prior to departure to check-in, sign the boat manifest and show proof of fishing license (not included)
- Please bring your own bedding – pillow and sleeping bag/blanket

Make your check payable to **LARRC** and mail to John Ballotti, 1751 B Andreo Avenue, Torrance, CA 90501.

Please contact Dustin House to inquire about availability

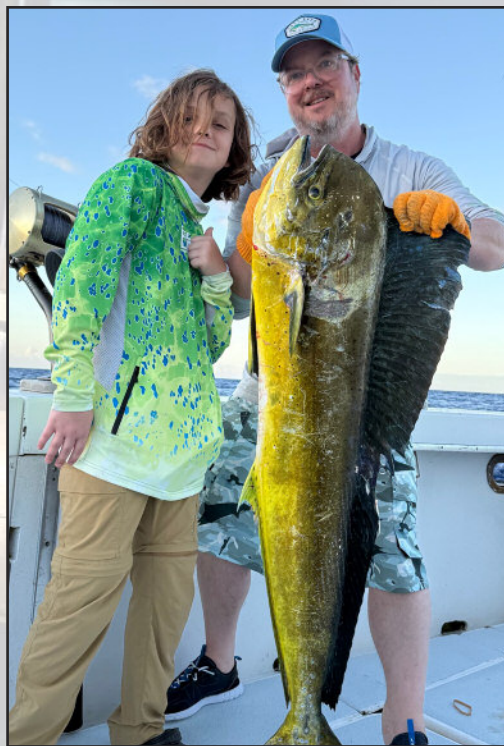
Spring Break in Oahu: A Family Adventure and a Fishing Day We'll Never Forget

By Greg and Connor Cohan, LARRC Member

This past April, my family—Emma (my wife), our 11-year-old son Connor, and I—escaped LA for a much-needed Spring Break in Oahu. We stayed in the iconic Rainbow Tower at the Hilton Hawaiian Village and soaked up the island vibes. But let's be honest: Connor and I had our eyes on one prize—offshore fishing in Hawaiian waters.

We had a full-day charter booked with **Boom Boom Sportfishing** out of Waianae Boat Harbor. That meant an early 5:30 AM departure and a one-hour drive from Waikiki, but we were fired up—visions of wahoo, mahi, and maybe even a marlin dancing in our heads. Captain Tony and deckhand Joe greeted us warmly, and we were off before sunrise with breakfast burritos, lunch, and cold drinks onboard.

Our day began trolling the buoy west of Kaena Point. Five rods in the water—two outriggers, three straight off the stern—and a full boat of anticipation. While I snuck away to use the head, Connor jumped into action. One of the rods bent hard, and Joe quickly cleared the deck. Connor was locked in a battle with a **beast**—a torpedo of a fish that gave us our first adrenaline spike of the morning. It was a **big mahi mahi**, we could see it dancing across the surface. It was shaping up to be the kind of day we dream about.



we dream about.

Between bites, Tony let Connor ride up top on the bridge. “Dad, it’s your turn next,” he kept yelling down to me. And sure enough, a reel screamed to life and Connor

shouted, “HOOK UP!” I grabbed the center rod and dug in—but Joe quickly reminded me to let it run. This fish was angry and ran deep. It wasn’t a mahi. It was fast—it was heavy. After a grueling fight, we saw



color...

an **8-foot silky shark**. Not what we came for, but what a battle. The line was either cut or broke off at the stern. No pictures, but I counted it. Wink wink, nudge nudge.

Connor followed up with another mahi—smaller but still full of spirit—and then we began the long troll toward a new offshore mark. Tony had gotten a call: “The bite’s on—20 miles out.” That’s not a trip they usually make unless the fish are really chewing.

After a couple hours of trolling and a full swap of the lures (the little wahoo bombs replaced with big-game ones), we were greeted with a takedown. Connor was on the rod again—and this was no mahi. You could see the heavy head shakes on the rod tip. As I was reeling in one of the lines to get it out of the way, it got

slammed. A smaller mahi, fast and fiery. Joe and Tony worked like clockwork—Mahi off, into the kill box, ready for whatever was to come next.

Meanwhile, Connor was still in the fight of his young life. He cranked, rested, and cranked again. Then we saw the silver glow, the yellow lateral line, and long trademark fins. **Yellowfin tuna. And a big one.** Joe and Tony hit it with a perfect double gaff. No West Coast spike here—Joe gave it the Hawaiian treatment with a priest. Blood splattered across the deck, our shoes, our clothes. **A badge of honor.**

I wasn’t done either. Another big fish hit, and I was up. My arms were already toast from the shark, but this was

my shot at a yellowfin. After another long fight, I landed a solid one—not quite Connor’s size, but still a trophy.

We were headed back, exhausted but happy and done. Or so we thought.

“Zzzzzzzzz!” The line ripped again. One last bite. A hard-fighting fish that refused to show itself. We took turns—me, then Connor, then me again. When we finally got color, the we exploded with excitement.

A blue marlin.

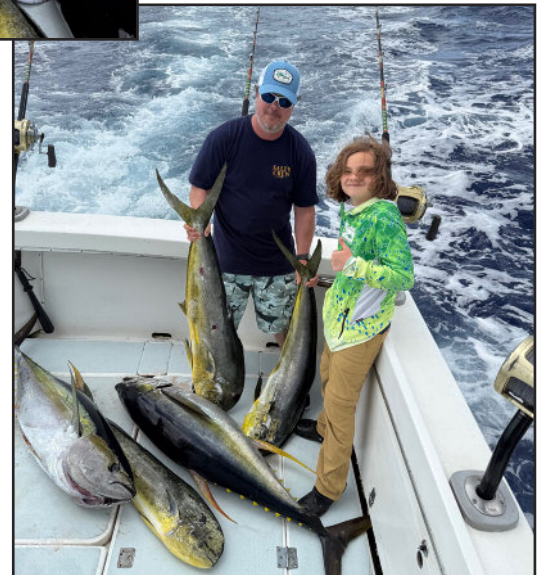
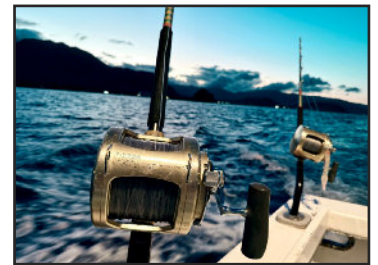
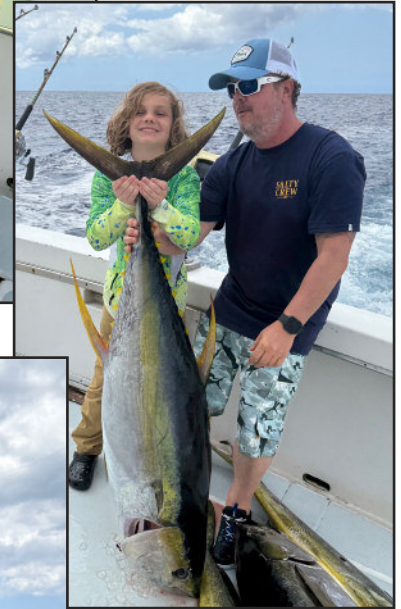
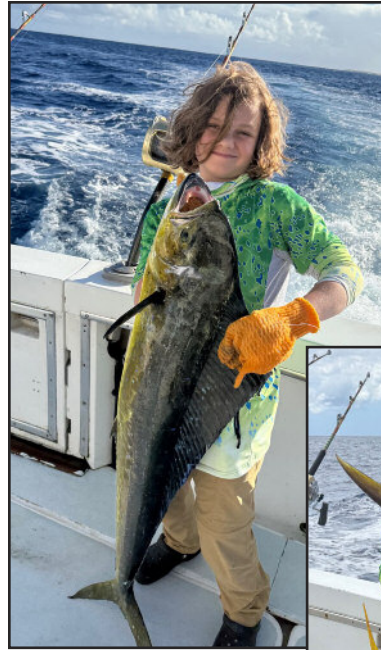
Our bucket list just got a little shorter.

We returned to the dock later than scheduled. A family waiting to board asked how our trip went. I couldn’t resist. “It was terrible,” I said. “Only three mahi, two giant yellowfin... oh, and a blue marlin.” The look on Connor’s face said it all.

“Dad...” he said, grinning, “next up—a giant bluefin.”

The rest of our vacation was great—snorkeling, Pearl Harbor, Jurassic Park movie sites, and a birthday dinner on the

North Shore—but **the fishing...** the fishing was a highlight. Memories made. Bucket list checked. And a fire lit in Connor’s heart that’ll burn for a lifetime.



TACKLE DONATION AND STORAGE UPDATE

Hello from Tami Shepphird and Sophia Huynh, your new Tackle Donation and Storage Unit and Tackle Sale Chairpersons.

If you aren't sure what we do, let me give you a little info. We have been under the tutelage of Steve Simon, who as you all know has worn many many hats for the Club/Foundation), for the last few weeks. He has been guiding us on what is in the storage unit and what he has done in the past with all the stuff. If you are wondering, what stuff? Well, we (LARRC Foundation) are the lucky recipients of any tackle, gear and misc donations from members or the public. In return, we give them a donation receipt and very heartfelt thank you. Now it is our job to pick up the donations and sort/clean/organize it for future tackle sales.

Tami and I spent a few days cleaning up and organizing the storage unit and coming up with ideas on how to move

forward. We felt Club members should have first chance to purchase the items that were donated before we sell them to the public or a



wholesale tackle buyer. So we will create a list with pictures, description and suggested price then have it sent to all Club members. Pick up will be at the monthly dinner meetings and we will accept cash and checks only. If more than one member is interested we can have an impromptu auction.

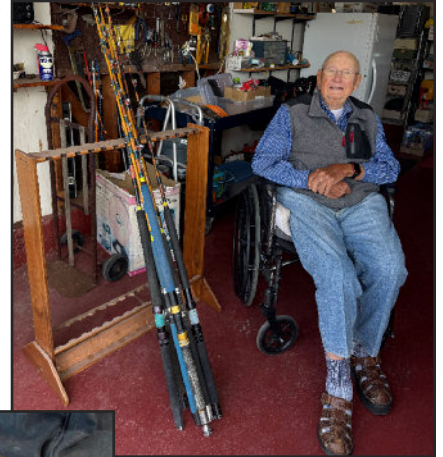


Now, you must wonder what Tami and I will be doing with all that money...I promise we will not be going to Vegas! All the money raised is used to fund our Foundation Kids and Veterans Fishing trips. It all goes to a fantastic cause, that is near and dear to all of our hearts.

Recently, Club member Al Scow donated fishing gear that he is no longer using. Here are some items he donated. If you are interested in them, give Tami or me a call or email. He posed for a picture with the rod rack he crafted by hand. There is a line winder, serving/ splicing kit for braid to braid connections, and the rod rack. Thank you so much Al!!

So keep an eye on your emails and the Chum Line for more items that will be available.

Thank you for all your support!
Tami & Sophia



Members...

Steve Simon kicking bass and taking names with these beauties. The largest weighing in at 4lbs 3oz; all on the Sinko Lure



TROPHY CONTENDERS 2025 as of April 30, 2025

SPECIES	LINE TEST	ANGLER	LBS.	OZ.
MEN'S OCEAN WATER				
Dorado	200	Greg Cohan	32	8*
Marlin, Blue	200	Greg Cohan	160	1*
Tuna, Yellowfin	200	Greg Cohan	81	2
Wahoo	60	Marc Monforte	72	6*
Yellowtail	50	Marc Monforte	48	2
MEN'S FLY ROD				
MEN'S FRESH WATER				
Bass, Large Mouth	4	Paul Varenchik	7	0
Bass, Large Mouth	8	Scott Schiffman	6	5
Bass, Large Mouth	9	Greg Cohan	3	8
Bass, Large Mouth	10	Joel Steinman	8	4*
MEN'S FRESH WATER RELEASED				
Shark, Silky	200	Greg Cohan	RELEASED	

SPECIES	LINE TEST	ANGLER	LBS.	OZ.
WOMEN'S OCEAN WATER				
WOMEN'S FLY ROD				
WOMEN'S FRESH WATER				
WOMEN'S FRESH WATER RELEASED				
WOMEN'S OCEAN WATER RELEASED				
JUNIOR MEMBERS				
Bass, Large Mouth	8	Connor Cohan	2	9
Bass, Large Mouth	10	Emilee Steinman	RELEASED	
Bass, Large Mouth	10	Valentine Steinman	RELEASED	
Bass, Large Mouth	10	Vincent Steinman	RELEASED	
Dorado	200	Connor Cohan	32	8*
Tuna, Yellowfin	200	Connor Cohan	89	5*

FIRST GAME FISH OF THE YEAR

FIRST ALBACORE OF THE YEAR

Charters 2025

RULES REGARDING CLUB CHARTERS

All LARRC charter participants signing up for club charters are obligated to pay the full fare to reserve a spot. In the event a participant cannot make a trip, the club will attempt to fill the space once a waitlist forms. A participant may try to fill their space prior to departure. There may be surcharges this year based on fuel price increases. Bunk preference is assigned by the charter master based on the order received. So book early! If you have any special needs please make the charter master aware of them at the time of booking.

June 2-4	Navegante	1.5 Day Trip • \$455 Member / \$470 Non-member
June 21	Betty-O	Twilight Trip • \$75 (includes tip)
July 24	Navegante	King of the Club • \$175 • Eleven teams of two
October 28-30	Navegante	1.5 Day Trip • \$455 Member / \$470 Non-member

Health and Happenings

Linda Simon is our contact for "Health and Happenings"
 Please contact Linda either by phone (818-980-7470) or email (simonmurphy08@gmail.com) for any information about our club members/ family - i.e., happy or sad news; health issues; graduation or congratulations, etc.

Los Angeles Rod & Reel Club Foundation

Tribute Opportunity

Tribute Cards are available when you want to send your thoughts or feelings for –
 Congratulations • Graduation
 Anniversary • Illness Appreciation • Best Wishes
 New Home Baby Announcement
 Bar/Bat Mitzvahs • In Memoriam

Your LARRC Foundation is a charitable organization.

Donations maybe deducted. Tributes will be posted in the Chum Line.

Tribute cards will be sent to recipient.

Information Request and Donations may be addressed to:

Mrs. Tammy Steinman
 1941 Majorca Drive, Oxnard, CA 93035
 818-987-2645 • 818-345-6104 Fax
tammy2508@socal.rr.com



Los Angeles Rod & Reel Club
 c/o John Ballotti
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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION
 Contact Toby Williams
 Email:
toeb34@gmail.com

Chum Line

Published by the Los Angeles Rod & Reel Club @ www.larrc.org
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/LosAngelesRodandReelClub
 Editor: Sophia Huynh (fishnsoph@gmail.com)

2025 OFFICERS

President	John Ballotti
Vice President	Toby Williams
Secretary	Dustin House
Treasurer	John Ballotti
Historian	Dustin House

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tami Shepphird	John Ballotti
Keith Heerd	Toby Williams
Carol Chow	Dustin House
Scott Schiffman	

2025 FOUNDATION TRUSTEES

Keith Heerd - Chairperson

Ron Glider	Toby Williams
Paul Varenchik	Chas Schoemaker
John Goss	

2025 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Family Event	Mike Hartt & Ted Feit
Apparel	OPEN
Awards Banquet 2025	John Ballotti
By-laws and Legal	Randy Sharon
Charters	Dustin House
Chum Line Editor	Sophia Huynh
Communications	Scott Schiffman & Michael Godfrey
Dinner Meetings	Tami Shepphird
Dinner Speakers	Wendy Tochiara
Elections	OPEN
Environmental Affairs	John Ballotti
Events:	
Earl Warren's Memorial Kids' Trip	Paul Varenchik & John Goss
Lou Berke Fish Derby	Ted Feit & Carol Chow
Bill Alpert King of the Club	Dustin House
Frank Polak Marine Mentors' Trip	Andrew Ratzky
Fishing Records	Joel Steinman
Fly Fishing	Rob Baldwin
Hall of Fame	John Ballotti
Health and Happenings	Linda Simon
Membership	Toby Williams
Public Relations	OPEN
Raffles	Scott Schiffman
Surf Fishing	Keith Heerd
Tackle Management - maintenance	OPEN
Tackle Management - storage & donations	Tami Shepphird & Sophia Huynh
Tax Consultant	John Rhind
Tributes	Tammy Steinman
Veterans' Trips	Steve Simon
Trophies	Sophia Huynh
Website	Scott Schiffman
Yearbook	John Ballotti