

# Chum Line



Good Sportsmanship is Worth More Than all the Fish in the Ocean JANUARY 2026

## LARRC DINNER MEETING

# LARRC WELCOMES STEVE YATOMI - YOUR GATEWAY TO TRUE ADVENTURE

The Los Angeles Rod and Reel Club is proud to welcome Steve Yatomi of Adventure Travel Alliance as our January speaker — and if you've ever dreamed of a fishing or hunting trip that feels truly once in a lifetime, this is a seminar you don't want to miss.

For decades, Adventure Travel Alliance has built its reputation on one thing: unmatched, personal service. In a world full of online "experts" and pop up travel brokers, Steve stands apart. He delivers the kind of reliability, on the ground knowledge, and hands on support that only comes from years of scouting destinations, building relationships, and traveling alongside real anglers and hunters.

Steve understands what today's travelers are up against — overcrowded hotspots, inflated prices, and the same recycled destinations everyone gets pushed toward. His mission is different.

He specializes in:

- Newly developed fisheries and hunting areas with incredible potential
- Classic, under the radar destinations that haven't been over pressured
- Remote, high value adventures offering pristine water, unspoiled terrain, and genuine discovery

If you want access to places most people don't even know exist — places where the fish are uneducated, the game is plentiful, and the experience feels like stepping into untouched wilderness — Steve is the guy who can get you there.

This seminar is your chance to learn where the next great destinations are, how to avoid the crowds, and how to plan a trip that delivers the kind of memories you'll talk about for the rest of your life.



## Dinner Meeting

## January 26, 2026

**Social Hour 6:30pm Dinner and Meeting 7:00pm**

**Lulu's Restaurant • 16900 Roscoe Blvd. • Van Nuys, CA 91406**

# What's On My Mind

By John Ballotti

## Annual Banquet and Fundraiser

The annual club banquet and foundation fundraiser on February 15 marks the end of my term as your president and the start of an exciting new leadership from **Tami Shepphird** as the incoming president. I am confident you will give her and her vice president, **Carol Chow**, the same support and respect you have shown me over the past two years. Last year, we celebrated the 75th anniversary of our club's founding. This year, we celebrate the true meaning of our club: fishing, family, friendship, and community service.

Fishing, family, friendship, and community service each play a significant role in enriching human life, fostering well-being, and building strong social bonds.

Fishing is more than just a recreational activity or a means of livelihood; it connects people to nature, offering a peaceful escape from daily stresses. It teaches patience, respect for the environment, and self-reliance. For many, fishing is a tradition passed down through generations, strengthening family ties and cultural heritage.

Family forms the cornerstone of emotional support and personal development. It provides a sense of belonging, security, and unconditional love. Strong family relationships nurture values such as trust, empathy, and cooperation, which are essential for individual growth and societal harmony. Families are often the first community individuals engage with, shaping their social skills and moral compass.

Friendship complements family by offering chosen bonds that provide companionship, encouragement, and shared experiences. True friendships enhance mental health by reducing feelings of loneliness and stress. Friends challenge and inspire each other, creating a support network that extends beyond biological ties. The mutual trust and understanding in friendships contribute to resilience and happiness.

Community service embodies the spirit of collective responsibility and altruism. Engaging in service activities strengthens communities by addressing social issues, promoting inclusivity, and fostering a culture of helping others. It cultivates empathy and broadens perspectives, encouraging individuals to contribute positively to society. Community service also builds social capital, creating networks of cooperation and trust that benefit everyone.

Together, fishing, family, friendship, and community service

form an interconnected web that supports emotional well-being, social cohesion, and personal fulfillment. They nurture relationships, encourage responsibility, and create a sense of purpose. Embracing these elements enriches lives and builds stronger, more compassionate communities.



## CALENDAR

### Board Meeting

January 19, 2026  
Via Zoom • 7pm

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

### Dinner Meeting

January 26, 2026  
Lulu's Restaurant

16900 Roscoe Blvd. • Van Nuys, CA 91406  
Social Hour - 6:30pm Dinner & Meeting 7:00pm

### Annual Awards Banquet

February 15, 2026

### Lou Berke Fishing Derby

Tenative April 24, 2026

### Lake Sherwood Family Events

May 9, 2026

### Surf Fishing Crew Expeditions

TBD June-August 2026

### Earl Warren Memorial

#### Kids' Trip

Marina del Rey  
July 6, 2026

# CONSERVATION MATTERS

January 2026

By Theresa Labriola

As we enter a new year, I want to reflect on the promise of a thriving marine ecosystem with plenty of fish and consider the challenges that lie ahead. Last year's ocean conservation successes helped us imagine an ocean with abundant Pacific bluefin tuna and enough forage fish to support their growth. At the same time, we were challenged with finalizing meaningful, on-the-water measures to reduce catch of overfished stocks such as striped marlin and to rebuild an ocean staple, sardine. Despite advances in technology that can reduce bycatch of threatened and endangered species, nations failed to agree on the definition of a "large" circle hook, precluding their required use in the eastern Pacific. Scientists began to match oceanographic conditions with catch of non-target species, giving us new hope for a new way to minimize the impact of industrial tuna fishing on the open ocean ecosystem through time-area closures. At Wild Oceans, we shifted leadership. Rob Kramer retired, and I accepted the role of President of Wild Oceans. We will continue to fight for healthy oceans, focussing on conserving the big fish, the tunas and billfish we love to chase and which inspire so many fish tales, and also the habitat that sustains their numbers. Cheers to 2026!

## **2026: The Ocean's Turning Point, What to watch, why it matters, what's at stake**

In this insightful commentary from Ocean Rising, Luke outlines six big ocean moments coming this year and explains why it matters, and what's at stake if we get it wrong or right.

1. **The High Seas Finally Get a Law.** On 17 January 2026, the High Seas Treaty becomes international law. This is massive. For the first time ever, there's a legal framework to protect the 61% of the ocean that sits beyond any country's control.

2. **The 30x30 Promise Get's Tested.** In October, countries meet in Armenia for COP17, the biodiversity conference. This is where they have to show their homework on the promise they made in 2022: protect 30% of land and ocean by 2030.

3. **Deep-Sea Mining: Do We Destroy What We Don't Understand?** Four kilometres down, the ocean floor holds metals worth trillions. Cobalt. Nickel. Manganese. They sit in nodules on abyssal plains that

haven't been disturbed for millions of years. Hydrothermal vents nearby host life forms that exist nowhere else on the planet. Some companies want to mine these metals. Scientists say we have no idea what we'd be destroying.

4. **The Ocean Keeps Heating. The Reef Faces Judgment.** The ocean has absorbed over 90% of the extra heat from climate change. That's why the atmosphere hasn't warmed even faster. The ocean has been protecting us. But it's paying the price. And it's running out of capacity.

5. **Fishing Rules Get Tighter (In Some Places).** Overfishing is one of the biggest ongoing assaults on the ocean. We're taking fish faster than they can reproduce. Trawlers drag weighted nets across the seabed, destroying everything in their path. Illegal fishing operations work in the dark, unreported and untracked. In 2026, the rules are tightening. In some places.

<https://www.oceanrising.co/p/2026-the-oceans-turning-point>

## **Sullivan, Murkowski, Begich Introduce Bycatch Reduction & Research Act**

Earlier this month, Senators Dan Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski, and Congressman Nick Begich (all R-Alaska), introduced the Bycatch Reduction and Research Act. The legislation would improve marine environmental data collection, particularly in Alaska; prioritize technology that supports research, bycatch reduction, and protection of marine seafloor habitat; advance, streamline, and enhance electronic monitoring and electronic reporting in United States fisheries; and establish a fund to provide financial assistance for the deployment of gear and technology for reducing bycatch and marine seafloor habitat contact from trawl fishing gear. <https://www.sullivan.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/sullivan-murkowski-begich-introduce-bycatch-reduction-and-research-act>

## **First Temporary Experimental Outplanting of Sunflower Stars in California Marks Major Milestone in Ocean Recovery**

In a historic first for California, juvenile sunflower stars, reared in human care, were successfully placed into the ocean and later retrieved as part of a pio-

neering field study aimed at restoring one of the Pacific's most ecologically vital and endangered marine species. This collaborative effort marks a turning point in the fight to recover sunflower stars and the kelp forests they help sustain. As sunflower stars have not been seen in central California since 2018 and are listed as critically-endangered by the IUCN, this milestone for California marks a critical step toward addressing the decline of sunflower stars and restoring balance to California's coastal ecosystems, offering hope for the recovery of kelp forests and the countless species that depend on them. "The collaboration underpinning this project demonstrates the overwhelming support and capacity for applied sunflower star restoration research in California," said Ashley Kidd, Sunflower Star Laboratory's Conservation Project Manager and the study lead. "The success of this project is informing the next phase of our restoration efforts of this keystone species in California."

<https://www.sunflowerstarlab.org/news/sunflower-stars-restoration-research-california>

### **US Congress rejects Trump's NOAA Fisheries cuts in compromise budget proposal**

In January, U.S. lawmakers largely rejected U.S. President Donald Trump's proposed budget cuts to NOAA Fisheries in a new compromise appropriations bill Congress needs to pass before the government once again runs out of money on 30 January. On 5 January, House and Senate appropriations leaders released a compromise piece of legislation that will fund the U.S. Department of Commerce - which houses NOAA Fisheries - through the rest of fiscal year 2026, which runs until the end of September. The compromise bill's spending for NOAA Fisheries largely aligns with the original Senate version of the legislation, ignoring the Trump administration's proposal to slash the agency's funding and eliminate programs. "This package rejects President Trump's push to let our competitors do laps around us by slashing federal funding for scientific research by upwards of 50 percent and killing thousands of good jobs in the process. It protects essential funding for our public lands, rejects steep proposed cuts to public safety grants that keep our communities safe, and boosts funding for key flood mitigation projects," U.S. Senator Patty Smith (D-Washington) said in a release.

<https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/supply-trade/congress-rejects-trump-s-noaa-fisheries-cuts-in-compromise-budget-proposal>



*Chas Schoemaker sends his greetings from Auckland, NZ with this cute little fish. The big yellowtail weren't interested in biting but at least he got a new species.*

## **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:

John Ballotti  
1751 B Andreo Avenue • Torrance, CA 90501  
[johnballotti@gmail.com](mailto:johnballotti@gmail.com)

## **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](mailto:simonmurphy08@gmail.com)) for any information about our club members/ family - i.e., happy or sad news; health issues; graduation or congratulations, etc.

MIXER | RAFFLE | FREE ENTRY | SEMINAR

# ANGLERS' NIGHT OUT

SALTWATER BASS FORUM: YOUNG VS. OLD

*THE OLD*



JIMMY DECKER



MATT KOTCH



ERIK  
LANDESFEIND

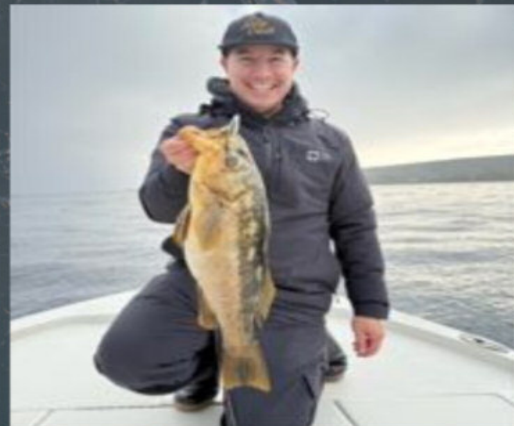
*VS.*

RANDY SPIZER

MATT

FLORENTINO

LANE KILLIAN



*THE YOUNG*

JANUARY 24TH | 3PM - 6PM

BOB SANDS FISHING TACKLE - VAN NUYS, CA

WWW.CCACALIFORNIA.ORG

# Members...



Wendy Tochihara Carolina rigged a Yamamoto creature bait and caught and released a solid 3 lb 8 oz bass while casting and blasting along the Colorado River with Sophia, Chris, and Merit.

## NEW CLUB RECORDS as of DECEMBER 31, 2025

SPECIES	LINE TEST	ANGLER	LB	OZ
<b>MEN'S SALT</b>				
Dorado	200	Greg Cohan	32	8*
Marlin, Blue	200	Greg Cohan	160	1*
Rockfish, Vermillion	60	Greg Cohan	5	11*
Wahoo	60	Marc Monforte	72	6*
<b>MEN'S FLYROD</b>				
Trout, Rainbow	6	Keith Heerd	6	0*
<b>MEN'S FRESH</b>				
Bass, Lg Mouth	10	Joel Steinman	8	4*
Drum, Freshwater	7	Keith Heerd	7	4*
<b>WOMEN'S SALT</b>				
Wahoo	50	Wendy Tochihara	70	7*
Wahoo	60	Wendy Tochihara	40	2*
<b>WOMEN'S FLYROD</b>				
Trout, Rainbow	6	Carol Chow	5	4*
<b>JUNIOR MEMBERS</b>				
Dorado	200	Connor Cohan	32	8*
Tuna, Yellowfin	200	Conner Cohan	89	5*

**TROPHY WINNERS 2025**  
as of December 31, 2025

SPECIES	LINE TEST	ANGLER	LBS.	OZ.	SPECIES	LINE TEST	ANGLER	LBS.	OZ.
<b>MEN'S OCEAN WATER</b>					<b>WOMEN'S OCEAN WATER</b>				
Bass, Calico	15	John Ballotti	4	2	Halibut, California	30	Wendy Tochiara	4	14
Bass, Calico	30	Greg Cohan	2	9	Tuna, Yellowfin	60	Wendy Tochiara	95	6
Bass, Striped Salt	30	Ed Lieberman	18	0	Wahoo	50	Wendy Tochiara	70	7*
Dorado	200	Greg Cohan	32	8*	Wahoo	60	Wendy Tochiara	40	2*
Halibut, California	25	Greg Cohan	12	6	<b>WOMEN'S FLY ROD</b>				
Halibut, California	30	Andrew Ratzky	18	4	Trout, Rainbow	6	Carol Chow	5	4*
Halibut, California	30	Merit McCrea	9	7	<b>WOMEN'S FRESH WATER</b>				
Marlin, Blue	50	Ed Lieberman	55	0	<b>WOMEN'S FRESH WATER RELEASED</b>				
Marlin, Blue	200	Greg Cohan	160	1*	<b>WOMEN'S OCEAN WATER RELEASED</b>				
Rockfish, Vermillion	60	Greg Cohan	5	11*	<b>JUNIOR MEMBERS</b>				
Roosterfish	30	Ed Lieberman	50	0	Bass, Large Mouth	8	Connor Cohan	2	9
Tuna, Yellowfin	200	Greg Cohan	81	2	Bass, Large Mouth	10	Emilee Steinman	RELEASED	
Wahoo	60	Marc Monforte	72	6*	Bass, Large Mouth	10	Valentine Steinman	RELEASED	
Yellowtail	30	Andrew Ratzky	25	10	Bass, Large Mouth	10	Vincent Steinman	RELEASED	
Yellowtail	30	Greg Cohan	12	6	Bass, Large Mouth	10	Vincent Steinman	RELEASED	
Yellowtail	40	Greg Cohan	25	2	Bass, Striped	6	Connor Cohan	2	9
Yellowtail	50	Marc Monforte	48	2	Dorado	200	Connor Cohan	32	8*
<b>MEN'S SALT WATER RELEASED</b>					Bass, Large Mouth	200	Connor Cohan	89	5*
Marlin, Striped	50	Chas Schoemaker	RELEASED		Tuna, Yellowfin	30	Connor Cohan	8	5
Shark, Silky	200	Greg Cohan	RELEASED		<b>FIRST GAME FISH OF THE YEAR</b>				
Tuna, Bluefin	100	Greg Cohan	132 Taped		Halibut, California	30	Merit McCrea	9	7
<b>MEN'S FLY ROD</b>							May 11, 2025		
Trout, Rainbow	6	Keith Heerd	6	0*	<b>FIRST ALBACORE OF THE YEAR</b>				
<b>MEN'S FRESH WATER</b>						500	Dirk Perriseau	24	0
Bass, Large Mouth	4	Paul Varenchik	7	0			August 18, 2025		
Bass, Large Mouth	8	Scott Schiffman	6	5					
Bass, Large Mouth	10	Joel Steinman	8	4*					
Bass, Striped	6	Greg Cohan	4	5					
Drum, Freshwater	7	Keith Heerd	7	4*					
<b>MEN'S FRESH WATER RELEASED</b>									
Bass, Large Mouth	12	Paul Varenchik	RELEASED						

**Chum Line Editor: Sophia Huynh**

**If you would like to submit pictures, articles, recipes for publication  
please contact me via email**

**fishnsoph@gmail.com**

**Share your experiences with your fellow club members!**



Los Angeles Rod & Reel Club  
 c/o John Ballotti  
 1751B Andreo Avenue  
 Torrance, CA 90501  
 Email: [johnballotti1@gmail.com](mailto:johnballotti1@gmail.com)

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**  
 Contact Toby Williams  
 Email:  
[toeb34@gmail.com](mailto:toeb34@gmail.com)

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 Editor: Sophia Huynh ([fishnsoph@gmail.com](mailto: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	Andrew Ratzky

## 2025 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Family Event	Keith Heerd
Apparel	Toby Williams
Awards Banquet 2026	John Ballotti
By-laws and Legal	Randy Sharon
Charters	Dustin House
Chum Line Editor	Sophia Huynh
Communications	Scott Schiffman
Dinner Meetings	Tami Shepphird
Dinner Speakers	Wendy Tochiara
Elections	Greg Cohan
Environmental Affairs	John Ballotti
Events:	
Earl Warren's Memorial Kids' Trip	Paul Varenchik & John Ballotti
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	Ron Ballanti
Raffles	Scott Schiffman
Surf Fishing	Keith Heerd
Tackle Management - maintenance	<b>OPEN</b>
Tackle Management - storage & donations	Tami Shepphird & Sophia Huynh
Tax Consultant	John Rhind
Tributes	John Ballotti
Veterans' Trips	Steve Simon
Trophies	Sophia Huynh
Website	Scott Schiffman
Yearbook	John Ballotti