

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[Western Flyer Photos and Assets](#)

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The *Western Flyer* Sets Sail!

Two Days of Stories, Celebration & Send-Off Festivities in Monterey on March 15 & 16

Monterey, CA – Eighty-five years ago, the *Western Flyer* set sail for the Gulf of California with what the *Monterey Peninsula Herald* described as “perhaps the strangest crew ever signed aboard a local workboat” ([read the 1940 article here](#)). Among them were renowned author **John Steinbeck** and marine biologist **Ed Ricketts**, embarking on the journey that would inspire the literary classic *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*.

Now, for the first time since 1940, this legendary vessel—newly restored—will retrace its historic route on a three-month expedition packed with science, education, and community outreach.



Members of the 1940 expedition, printed in the [Monterey Peninsula Herald](#), March 11, 1940. Courtesy of the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies, SJSU. [Click on the photo to view and download.](#)

Before the *Western Flyer* sets sail, the community is invited to a **special weekend of send-off celebrations**—85 years to the week after its historic departure! These events will honor the vessel’s enduring legacy and mark the beginning of its next great journey. The festivities will culminate in a farewell celebration at Old Fisherman’s Wharf—the same location where Steinbeck, Ricketts, and their crew first set sail!

Saturday, March 15 - Tales from the *Western Flyer* Stories, Legends & the Voyage Ahead

When? Saturday, March 15, 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Where? Stanton Center, 5 Custom House Plaza, Monterey, CA

[Get Tickets & Learn More](#)

For nearly a century, the *Western Flyer* has been home to fishermen, scientists, sailors, and storytellers—so you can bet this boat has some tales to tell! On the eve of its departure, hear legendary stories, view images from its historic voyage, meet the crew, and get a glimpse of what lies ahead on its return to the Gulf of California.

A limited number of tickets are available for \$30 each and include drinks, appetizers, access to the Stanton Center's *Steinbeck in Monterey* and *Bounty of the Sea* exhibits. Proceeds support the Western Flyer Foundation and the Monterey History and Art Association.

Sunday, March 16 - *Western Flyer* Send-Off Celebration

Be Part of History—Party like It's 1940!

When? Sunday, March 16, 2025 | 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM | Departure at 3:00 PM

Where? Old Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey, California

More Info: www.westernflyer.org/events/

Eighty-five years ago, when Steinbeck, Ricketts, and their crew set sail, Monterey was already in party mode—the annual Fishermen's Festival was in full swing. Naturally, the crew joined in (because who would miss “one of the best parties in local history,” according to another article published in the *Monterey Peninsula Herald* that day?). Now, it's time to do it again!

This free, community celebration will feature:

- Live Music & Dancing – Ballet folklórico, swing dancers, jazz, and rollicking sea shanties by *The Fishwives*!
- 1940s costume contest - Dress to impress, strike a pose with “Ed Ricketts,” and win prizes!
- Tours of the *Western Flyer* – Step aboard and explore this legendary vessel (stay tuned for details on how to sign up for limited tours!)
- Hands-on science & art activities – Fun for kids and adults alike!
- Limited-Edition Commemorative T-Shirts – *Return to the Gulf of California* merch for sale
- Grand Finale – Watch as the *Western Flyer* sets sail at 3:00 PM with a fireboat escort and a celebratory ship horn farewell!

"This will be a truly special and one-of-a-kind event for Monterey," said Sherry Flumerfelt, Executive Director of the Western Flyer Foundation. "Back in 1940, the *Western Flyer* set sail with music, dancing, and a lively dockside send-off. We're working with the Monterey Public Library and other local partners to bring that same energy back with a farewell party worthy of this legendary vessel!"

More About the Expedition

The *Western Flyer*, immortalized in *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*, sets sail from Monterey on March 16, 2025, at 3:00 PM, retracing its historic 1940 route. Over the next three months, the *Flyer* will travel down the California coast and through the Gulf of California. More than a historical retracing, this voyage is a mission-driven expedition. Partnering with scientists, educators, and conservationists, the Western Flyer Foundation will conduct research, exchange knowledge, offer hands-on educational programs for youth, and inspire the next generation of ocean stewards. Read more about the historic voyage in the [February 6, 2025, press release](#).

Public Events Along the Way

As the *Western Flyer* embarks on its historic journey, the Western Flyer Foundation is working with community partners in California and Mexico to host public events, open houses, educational

tours, and presentations along the way. Stops include Santa Barbara, Long Beach, Newport Beach, San Diego, Ensenada, La Paz, Santa Rosalía, Agua Verde, San Jose del Cabo, and more—featuring special celebrations, museum partnerships, and public programs that bring the vessel’s legacy and mission to life. Learn more about upcoming events and locations at: <https://www.westernflyer.org/baja2025/>.

Follow the *Western Flyer's* Journey

Stay connected as the *Western Flyer* makes history again:

- Track the *Western Flyer* in real time – [Where's the Flyer?](#)
- Follow along for stories, videos, contests, and updates:
 - Email newsletter [westernflyer.org/newsletter/](https://www.westernflyer.org/newsletter/)
 - Facebook [@thewesternflyer](#)
 - Instagram [@westernflyerfoundation](#)
 - YouTube [@WesternFlyerFoundationChannel](#)

About the Western Flyer Foundation

The Western Flyer Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that sparks curiosity by blending science and art, inspired by John Steinbeck, Ed Ricketts, and their 1940 journey aboard the *Western Flyer*. After an award-winning restoration, the foundation now provides free ocean-based education programs for students and engages scientists and communities through research and outreach. Learn more at www.westernflyer.org.

Corporate Partners

The Western Flyer Foundation is grateful for the support of its Corporate Partners, including:

- Chris Shake Enterprises
- InterContinental The Clement Monterey
- Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss

With additional thanks to in-kind supporters:

- Moss Landing Boatworks
- Uncruise Adventures
- Woodward Marine Market
- Penguin Classics

Interested in Corporate Partnership Opportunities? Visit www.westernflyer.org/become-a-corporate-partner/.

Interested in supporting the Western Flyer Foundation? It’s a great time to give! Learn more about our 100K matching gift campaign between now and March 16th when the *Flyer* departs.

Photos of the Farewell party on the *Western Flyer*, March 11, 1940

These and additional photos are available for use with credit to The Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies, SJSU. To access and download images, click on the photos below, or search “Western Flyer” or “Sea of Cortez” in [the photo database](#).

