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President's Report

It is with great pleasure that I write this first report as president of the China Lake Association. On behalf of the entire Lake Association, I would like to thank past president David Landry for his many years of dedicated leadership, exemplary stewardship, and tireless effort championing water quality. Although David is stepping down as president, he continues as an active member of the Board of Directors. His fund of knowledge of the Lake Association's history and mission and vision for the future are invaluable to me as I serve my term.

As I stated briefly at the Annual Meeting that hot night last August, I have read and reflected on the by-laws in order to have a basis on which to preside. As I understand it, we have three fundamental missions: education, research, and stewardship.

Perhaps the most fun and the most rewarding purpose of our organization is to educate the public on ways to restore, protect and improve the water quality of China Lake. One valuable educational resource is the school curriculum. Throughout the school year, China Middle School students learn about the lake in many ways, including water quality issues and improvement strategies, wetland ecosystem biology and conservation efforts, watershed protection, loon education, resource stewardship and more. As the students learn, they help educate friends and family on the importance of an active role in maintaining a healthy lake.

In the coming year, a revised Phosphorus Control Land Use Ordinance, renamed the China Water Quality Protection Ordinance, will be presented for Public Hearing in preparation for advancement to a Town Meeting referendum. The Ordinance is still in the development stage (see p. 2 for review). A central goal of the Ordinance is to improve and protect water quality of the lake and watershed. The China Lake Association will play an active role in educating the public about the content and importance of the new ordinance.

Research on the lake continues to be an actively supported mission of the Lake Association. In 2001, the Bureau of Land and Water Quality completed the China Lake TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) Phosphorus Study. The research quantifies the amount of nutrient load (added phosphorus) our lake can handle without creating water quality problems, and what actions are necessary to reduce the current nutrient loading down to that level. The report identifies and quantifies the sources of nutrients, both those that are internally recycled within the lake and those that are externally loaded from the environment around the lake. This research is valuable because at this point China Lake is among only a handful of lakes that has completed TMDL research. That distinguishes our lake in applying for major Federal and State funding for water quality research. The China Regional Lakes Alliance (CRLA) has submitted a proposal to the Department of Environmental Protection for consideration of grant monies under the EPA Watershed Initiative. We believe we are uniquely positioned because the CRLA has led intensive watershed-based lakes restoration projects through diverse sources of local, state and federal funding.

The ongoing work of the Lake Association requires your continued support. Annual memberships are due. Please renew using the membership form on the back page and ask a friend to become a member as well. When you renew, please consider renewing as a sponsoring member (\$100) or at the Benefactor level (\$500). You know that your contribution helps to protect our lake's great scenic, recreational, cultural and environmental value now and for future generations.

 Glenn Healey, President

CLA Annual Meeting - Monday, August 4, 7 pm, China Middle School Library

Water Quality Protection Ordinance Update

by David Landry

The water quality in China Lake has been extensively studied and measured for years now, and it appears that there is a trend toward stabilization. Data in recent years suggests that there may be later and milder blooms. Some of the reasons include less intense rainfall in the past few years, decreased erosion as a result of the many projects of the Conservation Corps, and increased community awareness of the kinds of individual activities that can collectively help to improve water quality.

In the fall of 2001, the voters elected to keep the Phosphorus Control Land Use Ordinance intact. It was realized however, that the ordinance needed to be updated and the Selectmen directed that a Phosphorus Study Committee be convened. The committee is comprised of citizens of China and includes representatives from the China Lake Association (CLA), the China Region Lakes Alliance (CRLA), the Kennebec Water District (KWD), the Kennebec County Soil and Water Conservation District (KCSWCD), the Board of Selectmen, and the Town of China Code Enforcement Office. Representatives of the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG) facilitate the meetings. Additional input was solicited from experts including a presentation on buffer systems given by the Senior Landscape Architect from the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT). The Committee meets regularly and the Town Line reports on the meetings, which are open to the general public. At some point there will be a participatory public hearing, but at this point we are still crafting language of the formal document. These are some highlights.

1. Although nutrient phosphorus is associated with the blue green algae bloom problem, the committee feels that it is more accurate to name the ordinance the Water Quality Protection Ordinance rather than the Phosphorus Control Ordinance.
2. The proposed ordinance is envisioned to be fair and inclusive. There will be provisions covering existing residential and commercial properties and existing roads. Our current ordinance applies only to new residential and commercial development and new roads.
3. The proposed ordinance attempts to place greater scrutiny on lands that are in close proximity to a water resource (shorefront property for example). The current ordinance applies equally throughout the watershed, which means that a landowner miles from the lake is subject to the same requirements as a landowner on the shorefront. The updated ordinance proposes that there be some basic rules that apply throughout the watershed, such as the need for erosion and sediment control if there is to be any soil disturbance, and the need for storm water management. However, the step forward is to focus the ordinance on the areas that are within 250 feet of a water resource (lake, river, or stream). The additional requirement will be the need for a phosphorus control plan in these areas. Generally, this will take the form of a vegetative buffer system.

The ordinance is continuing to be refined and improved. As a member of the Phosphorus Study Committee, I can report that this revised ordinance will be a major step forward. It is fair, it is inclusive, and it focuses the attention and efforts on the part of the watershed nearest to the water bodies, where our efforts can have the biggest impact (and also where our failure to act can produce the greatest harm). We are the stewards of the lake and it is our responsibility to do what we can to improve and assure quality water for ourselves and for generations. As the Committee comes closer to a consensus on ordinance language, we expect to bring to the citizens of China an ordinance that is easy to understand, user-friendly and desirable to adopt in referendum.

LAKE-SAVER LAWN FOOD

Green Lawns and Blue Lakes

This phosphorus-free fertilizer is made with an NPK ratio of 10-0-5, and fortified with pelletized lime to assure maximum plant uptake. It is ideal for establishment and maintenance of lawns. By using this product, you can enjoy a lush, green lawn without contributing phosphorus via runoff to Maine surface waters. Knowing that phosphorus is the greatest threat to the water quality of our lakes and ponds, the responsible landowner's choice is Lake-Saver. This product is available in attractively designed, reused, reusable 50 pound plastic pails.

Lake-Saver Lawn Food is available at China Lake Hardware on Lakeview Drive in China

(More information at www.ecocycle.com)

China Lake Association Annual Meeting

**Monday, August 4
7:00 pm
China Middle School
Library**

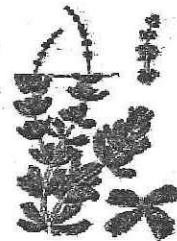
Agenda

1. President's Report
2. Election of Directors and Officers :
Glenn Healey, President;
David Preston, Secretary;
Bruce Daniels, Treasurer;
James C. Pitney, Jr.,
Clerk/Registered Agent
3. Guest Speaker: MLCI
Founder and Director
Shippen Bright
4. Other Business
5. Adjourn for Refreshments

Invasive Plant Patrol Workshop



Invasive, aquatic plants spread quickly and cause vast amounts of damage to lakes, killing off native species, destroying fisheries, destroying swimming and recreation and in some cases threatening public health. Once in



your lake they can cost thousands to millions of dollars just to control. For many invasive species there is NO WAY to eradicate them.

Prevention is the easiest and cheapest solution. That's why the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMMP), the China Region Lakes Alliance (CRLA), the China Lake Association, the Threemile Pond Association and the Threecornered Pond Association are sponsoring a comprehensive workshop to teach local citizens who see and use the lake every day how to be on the lookout for invasive species such as MILFOIL.

The 4.5 hour course (with a BYO meal break) is free and will provide the following:

- An overview and update of the invasive plant issue in Maine and beyond
- An expanded hands-on plant identification segment with new material on hydrilla
- The fundamentals of conducting an invasive plant screening survey.

This year the prestigious "PLANT PATROL" course will be held at the Vassalboro Town Office on **July 21 from 5 pm to 9:30 pm**. Please call to register by Friday July 18. Course limited to first 35. CRLA 445-5021 or VLMP 225-2070

The Invasive Plant Patrol workshops are made possible by boater participation in the Maine Lake and River Protection Sticker program.

Shippen Bright to Speak to CLA Members

Ship Bright, Founder and Executive Director of the Maine Lakes Conservancy Institute (MLCI), will be the guest speaker this year at the **China Lake Association Annual Meeting on Monday, August 4 at 7 pm** in the China Middle School Library. Ship founded the non-profit organization in 1999 to address statewide lake science education issues and to create "better stewards for today and leaders for tomorrow." China Middle School is one of its nine partner schools, chosen to reflect the geographic and cultural diversity of Maine. China's fifth grade class participates in its educational programs on board the "Melinda Ann," MLCI's mobile floating classroom, each spring. MLCI also conducts summer programs for lake associations on the boat, which is equipped with limnology and technical equipment for participants to use, explore and make discoveries. MLCI has already made "a splash" here in Maine and nationally as well. This spring, the organization was awarded the Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Merit Award for "Outstanding Contribution to New England's Environment" and Ship was appointed by the Bush Administration to the Federal Invasive Species Advisory Committee. He is the only New England representative on this national advisory board. He also serves on Maine's Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force. The Internet-based Student Portal at www.mlci.org, MLCI's distance learning initiative, has been hailed by the Maine Department of Education as an example of "transformative education" using the Internet and laptop technology. Recently, the George Lucas (Star Wars) Foundation created a documentary on MLCI's program and is showcasing MLCI on its website as one of America's "Unsung Hero's of Education." Come to the meeting and find out more!

China Leads the Way in Lake Education

China Middle School fifth grade teacher Anita Smith is paving the path to increased awareness and improved water quality. About six years ago, Smith and her colleagues De-De Lewis, Susan Maroon, and Roberta Dusoe began including a unit on China Lake in their science curriculum. To culminate their year of studies, they also began taking a field trip on pontoon boats on the lake in June. As part of the trip, they also visit the Kennebec Water District where they learn about how China's water is filtered and treated for drinking. The program has been so successful that it has become a model for surrounding towns. Vassalboro now has a Lake Day each year and Windsor is planning to follow suit. Two years ago, Ship Bright, founder and Executive Director of the Maine Lakes Conservancy Institute (MLCI), was so impressed by the students' knowledge of lake and water quality issues that he invited China Middle School fifth graders to be part of MLCI's pilot program, despite the fact that the program was developed for seventh graders. MLCI now has nine partner schools participating from all over the state, chosen to represent the geographic and cultural diversity of Maine. They are: Indian Township School in northeast Washington County, Nobleboro Middle School, China Middle School, Eagle Lake Elementary School in Fort Kent, Winthrop Middle School, Greenville Middle School, Rangeley Lakes Regional School, Bonny Eagle Middle School, and New Suncook School.

The students from these partner schools were also involved this year in helping MLCI set up a student portal at their website www.mlci.org. The idea is to have a resource for students to learn and share ideas about lakes and related issues. To quote from the site, the MLCI student portal is "an educational resource where students can exhibit, explain and explore Maine's Lakes. Using stories, poetry, pictures, video clips, and even field data, students of the MLCI's nine partner schools create a rich picture of the lakes surrounding them. Here students are inspired and motivated to become passionate stewards for their lake communities." Students contributed ideas throughout the year and chose research topics about "their" lakes. Topics include Lake History, Aquatic Plants, Lake Life, A Lake Log, Creative Expression, Lake Lore, Community Initiatives, and What's Unique About My Lake. Each year, students will add new information to the portal as they study their unit on lakes and water. The website has received many praises from the Department of Education and was featured on the news.

Thanks to the cooperative efforts of Anita Smith and her colleagues, the Kennebec Water District, the China Lake Association, the China Region Lakes Alliance and MLCI, our youth are becoming informed advocates for a healthy natural environment. Log on to www.mlci.org and see for yourself!

The China Lake Association would like to thank the volunteers who donated their time and/or boats for "Lake Day '03". They are: Emily Boyle, Michael and Pauline Trepanier, Judd Thompson, Tom and Marie Michaud, Whitney King and Laurette Darling from Colby College. We would also like to thank Christine Smith from the DEP and Americorps Volunteer Megan, the Kennebec Water District, and MLCI.

Jenna Richardson Joins CRLA Staff

Jenna Richardson began as the new Outreach Coordinator for The China Region Lakes Alliance (CRLA) last October. Jenna grew up in Waterville and has a strong connection to the lakes of central Maine, where much of her childhood was spent. She attended Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island where she earned a BA in Environmental Studies. At Brown she studied marine ecosystems and the policy that surrounds the protection of these natural resources. It was a natural transition when she moved to central Maine to focus on lakes. The China Region Lakes Alliance was a perfect opportunity to be involved in a local organization and help to educate both children and adults about our natural resources.

Jenna has been working on many different projects, including developing a website, writing grant proposals, partnering with the Maine Lakes Conservancy Institute to assist China Middle School with the web based student portal project, developing workshops and coordinating Lake Days for Windsor and Vassalboro schools and working with past president Dave Landry to spearhead a watershed survey of China Lake. She also has been busy creating many outreach materials including buffer displays, phosphorus ordinance outreach, lake talk articles and more.

She is very excited for this summer. "I feel as if I am only just getting started. I look forward to our program growing and improving all the time. The most amazing thing about this job is how much I have learned. Every day I learn something new whether it be through a local landowner, research, a colleague or a student at one of the schools. I feel very lucky to have this experience and I hope to make The China Region Lakes Alliance a more effective organization."

We welcome Jenna to China Lake and look forward to working together!

Watershed Survey Will Identify Pollution Sites

Under the guidance of China Region Lakes Alliance director Reb Manthey, volunteers are working on a survey of the China Lake watershed, the 32 square mile region surrounding the lake. Targeted watershed surveys have been done in the past with attention to the shore front, camp roads, and streams that ultimately flow into the lake. Pollution sites noted in past surveys were addressed as soon as possible. The goal of the current project is to survey the entire watershed, looking at areas that might not have been assessed in the past.

Prior to starting the survey, volunteers received instruction by Reb on the basics of watershed assessment. There are still volunteers needed. Members of the community can survey areas near their homes or sections of the watershed that they may be familiar with.

Anyone wishing to help out with this project can contact Reb Manthey or Jenna Richardson at the CRLA office at 445-5021.



Jenna Richardson, newly hired CRLA Outreach Coordinator, on the job.

If you would be interested in the job of editing and publishing this newsletter, please contact Janet Preston at 968-2565.

Water Level Controversy Continues

The controversy surrounding the water levels in China Lake continues to stir debate. In 1995, a group of citizens led by Al Althenn initiated a petition drive asking the Board of Environmental Protection (BEP) to investigate the water levels in China Lake. This resulted in a formal hearing in 1997. At that time the China Lake Association Board of Directors unanimously felt that the water levels were too high in the spring and winter but the Lake Association Board opposed the significant drop in water levels that was requested by the petitioners. The BEP acted by lowering the maximum allowable water levels from 18" over the dam spillway to 6" over the dam spillway and by adjusting the timing of the water draw down in the fall. In 2000, the group petitioning for lower water levels again initiated the hearing process and asked for a second look at water levels.

At press time a full hearing of the BEP is scheduled for August 21, 2003 (call China Town Office for location) to hear the petitioners request to return China Lake to "historic water levels." The China Lake Association under the direction of President Glenn Healey has opted not to be formally involved in the water level debate this time around. The CLA feels the issue has become too divisive and interferes with its mission of educating the community on water quality issues.

There are three main views represented by various groups at the hearing. Al Althenn is requesting a "return to historic water levels" which may represent a larger drop in water levels than the one foot drop requested by interveners Irma Simon and Robert O'Connor. David Landry and Jamie Pitney have become participants in the hearing urging the board to keep the existing water level plan.

Whatever your position on water levels is, you should stay informed. Water levels can impact water quality and water quality affects property values and overall enjoyment of lake users. The BEP hearing scheduled for August 21, 2003 has a portion reserved for public comment. Plan to attend and listen or voice your opinion. You can also contact the China Town Office and talk to your Selectmen or to Town Manager Dan L'Heureux. There should be more details regarding the hearing available through the town office as the hearing date approaches.

Northern Maine Children's Water Festival

by Anita Smith

In October 2002, the 5th grade students at China Middle School attended the Northern Maine Children's Water Festival. The festival is organized by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and is sponsored by many state and private agencies in Maine. This year's festival was held at the University of Maine in Orono.

The fifth graders participated in many different hands-on water related activities. The day began with a large group session focused on creative expression. The students worked with a song writer to create and record an original song with "water" as the theme.

Students attended four other hands-on sessions throughout the day. One session was called "You Be the Judge." Students had to role play various court scenes each dealing with some sort of bad land management practice. These practices included plowing fields right next to a stream, moving soil at a construction site without erosion control, and mowing lawns next to a lake without creating a buffer strip. This was a fun session and all the defendants were deemed "guilty" by the class jury.

The students also conducted a stream quality survey by sorting and counting the macroinvertebrates in a stream sample. They learned about the different types of macroinvertebrates in stream water and how scientists determine if a stream is healthy or not. In another session, called the "Water Olympics", students learned about some properties of water in a fun, semi-competitive way.

To test their knowledge, students participated in a game show called "Dripal Pursuit". Each game show was hosted by local TV station personality. China students competed against students from other schools and WON ALL THREE of our competitions! We were amazed at how much they had learned in our wetlands/water unit and we are proud of their success!

Other fun and interesting activities took place in the field house where demonstration tables illustrated information about amphibians in Maine, how the Poland Spring bottling plant works, and how scientists test ground water for contamination. Some of our students were interviewed by WABI TV and were featured on TV that evening!

The Children's Water Festival was a great chance for our fifth grade students to enrich their knowledge about water and water issues. We had a fun day full of learning opportunities and we hope we will be able to go again in the future.



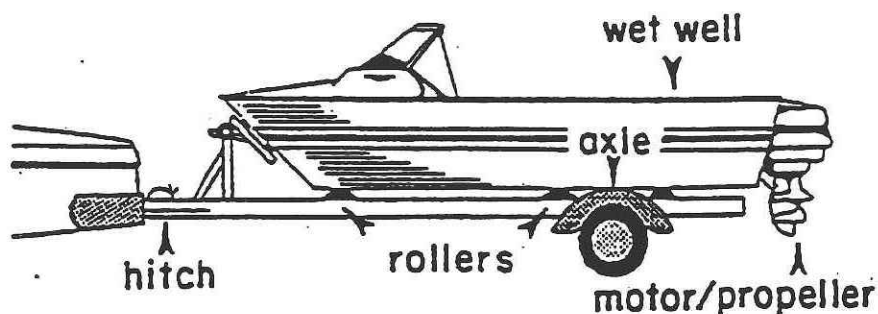
"Dripal Pursuit" winning team Logan Knox, Jason Goggin, Aaron Gilbert, and Elizabeth Fortin pose with Ric Tyler

PREVENT WATERMILFOIL FROM INFESTING OUR LAKES

IT'S THE LAW!

- Be sure your boat, trailer, propeller, fishing equipment, etc. are free of any plant fragments before launching.
- Dispose of plants on high, dry ground where there is no danger of them washing into any body of water.
- Report any possible occurrences of milfoil to Reb Manthey, the China Region Lakes Alliance Director at 445-5021.

REMOVE ALL PLANT
FRAGMENTS FROM:



Please send me information about...

- ☐ Buffer Strip Program, advice and assistance with shorefront planting of shrubs to reduce phosphorus runoff.
- ☐ Camp Road Program, advice and assistance regarding erosion prevention on camp roads.
- ☐ Shoreline Stabilization, rip-rap stones placed on banks of lake to prevent erosion.

I would like to volunteer to help with:

☐ Newsletter ☐ Lake Day ☐ Loon Count ☐ Watershed Survey

☐ I am interested in joining the CLA Board.

I would like to purchase _____ China Lake maps. (Please include \$5 for each map purchased.)

Name: _____ phone: _____

Address: _____ date: _____



China Lake Association
P.O. Box 6215
China Village, ME 04926

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Important Dates to Remember!

Mark your calendars!

July 21 - "Plant Patrol" course at Vassalboro Town Office, 5:00 - 9:30 pm

August 4 - CLA Annual Meeting at China Middle School, 7:00 pm

August 21 - BEP Water Level Hearing. (Call China Town Office for location.)

Membership renewals are due in July. Please use the form below. Thank You!

MEMBERSHIP FORM

China Lake Association

☐ Please renew my annual membership.

☐ I am a new member.

Name(s) _____

☐ Annual Family Membership: \$20

Address: _____

☐ Friend: \$35

City, ST, Zip: _____

☐ Patron: \$50

Phone: _____ Date: _____ Email: _____

☐ Sponsor: \$100

☐ Benefactor: \$500

☐ Other: _____

Please make check payable to China Lake Association and mail to P.O. Box 6215, China Village, ME 04926.

Thank you very much for your tax deductible contribution!