

China's Pride  
Keep it Alive



# CHINA LAKE ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

Volume 25, Issue 1

Summer 2012

## CLA Celebrates 25 Years!

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the China Lake Association - quite an accomplishment. We all owe a word of thanks to those foresighted folks who got together in someone's living room 25 years ago and decided to do something about the rapid decline in the water quality of China Lake. For most of those 25 years, Irma Simon was an active member of the CLA board and is the longest serving founding member. You can read of Irma's life on China Lake on page 2 of this newsletter.

The China Lake Association has had a significant number of major achievements. In 1990 under the direction of Steven Blackwell, the organization was instrumental in helping the Town of China begin the China Lake Restoration Project. This project was awarded a \$50,000 block grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to work on water quality issues in the lake. That was the first time HUD money was ever used for environmental issues. In 1995, the CLA was a founding member of the China Region Lakes Alliance (CRLA), which has become the model for lake restoration work around the state of Maine. In 2000, the China Lake Association was recognized as "Lake Association of the Year" by the Maine Congress of Lake Association (COLA) for its outstanding work in water quality improvement and public education. The achievements of the CLA would never have been possible without the strong ongoing commitment of our board of directors and members like you.

What about that winter we didn't have? Little snow, second earliest ice-out in 150 years, and over Memorial Day weekend the lake water was warm enough for swimming. By that I mean warm enough for adults to swim, not 8 year-old kids who have no sense of cold! That may seem like good news, but not in regards to water quality. The Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP), an organization that monitors water quality in Maine Lakes, has data to show that longer periods of ice cover on lakes are good for water quality. Why is that? When the lake is ice covered, oxygen levels in the water are higher. After the ice melts, oxygen levels begin to fall. Falling oxygen levels are bad for water quality. It is the total length of ice cover that matters. For this reason, ice-in times are also important. Ice-in time was late this year, about December 15<sup>th</sup> by my guess.

How will the Lake Association celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary? We are sponsoring a poster contest in the China Schools as part of our educational mission. Also, we are having some commemorative coffee cups produced that will be available at the CLA Annual Meeting or can be ordered using the membership form included with this newsletter. Most importantly, we are continuing to focus on the work at hand - educating the public about water quality issues, being a voice on your behalf, and focusing on issues that are important to improving water quality.

We are changing the time of our annual meeting this year to accommodate those who have trouble attending a weekday meeting. This year's **annual meeting** will take place **Saturday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, from 9-11 am** in the China Primary School gym. Coffee and muffins will be provided by China's newest coffee shop - the *Green Bean Coffee Shop*. We have a great speaker lined up: Bjorn Lake - an environmental engineer, who is currently conducting a study on strategies to improve water quality in China Lake. Bjorn works for Kleinschmidt Associates, a leading national engineering firm specializing in environmental issues. Bjorn will speak about ways to address the in-lake phosphorus which drives our annual algae blooms.

Hope to see all of you there!

David Landry, President

### Board of Directors

*President*  
Dave Landry

*Secretary*  
David Preston

*Treasurer*  
Tim Axelson

Joann Austin  
Ed Bourdeau  
Peter Caldwell  
Virginia Davis  
James Hart  
Marie Michaud  
Bob O'Connor  
Jamie Pitney  
Irma Simon  
Nancy Woodbrey

*Newsletter Editor*  
Janet Preston

## China Region Lakes Alliance News

by Jim Hart, President CRLA



*Seaward Mill Stream before (above) and after (below) one of Frank's stream clearing projects.*

The China Region Lakes Assiance (CRLA) is a non-profit organization whose sole mission is to protect and improve water quality of its member lakes. Formed in 1995, it coalesces talent and resources from local lake associations to plan and execute conservation projects. Representatives from each of the local lake associations, along with town officials and the Kennebec Water District, serve on its Board of Directors. It was the first regional lake alliance in the State and now stands tall as one of only six regional lakes organizations in the entire State of Maine. *Three Mile Pond, Three Cornered Pond, Webber Pond, and China Lake* comprise the member lakes of CRLA.

One of the exciting conservation projects is restoration of alewives, an anadromous fish, to Three Mile Pond, which is hydraulically connected to the ocean via Seaward Mills Stream, Webber Pond, Seven Mile Stream, and the Kennebec River, of course. Frank Richards, Webber Pond Lake Association President, is the project leader for the CRLA. The challenge is to fix a badly overgrown section of Seaward Mill Stream, which connects Three Mile Pond to Webber Pond. The growth interferes with the migration of sea run fish. Frank's group of volunteers is hand pulling and clearing to produce a free flowing channel in this section of stream at the Route 3 culvert inlet. This clear passage will enable the fish to travel freely between the two lakes. CRLA works closely with the landowners, Three Mile Pond Lake Association, numerous State and Federal agencies, and many local, interested stakeholders to evaluate whether the restoration of these anadromous fish can help improve the water quality by creating a net export of nutrients to the rest of the food chain in the ocean.

## China Lake Association Recognizes Irma Simon

While many have served the China Lake Association, no one has shown the dedication or love of China Lake that life-long lake resident Irma Simon has shown. Irma has spent most of her 83 summers on China Lake. Irma is part of the extended Jones family of South China. Her grandfather bought a farm on the east shore of China Lake in 1909, part of which was sold to noted Quaker teacher Rufus Jones, who built the now iconic boat house that is on the southern end of the East Basin. Irma still maintains a summer residence nearby. Her summer cottage started out as a Sears and Roebuck garage and was modified over time into the family camp.

Irma was present at the founding of the China Lake Association and has served on the CLA board for most of the 25 years the organization has been in existence. She has enthusiastically helped run boat tours, field day events, and distributed newsletters over the years. She is also the organization's unofficial historian regarding all things lake related.

Irma was born in Philadelphia to teacher Barclay Jones. At the end of the school year, Mr. Jones would pack up the family in the car and head to China for a summer on China Lake. Irma related that the car trip would take up to 18 hours, and she remembered with excitement when the family purchased a car that would go all of 45 m.p.h., a speed that would shorten the seasonal commute.

Irma has fond memories of her youth on the lake. Times were spent swimming, fishing, or visiting friends by boat. Her family had no motor boat, so visiting friends involved rowing, canoeing, or sailing to make the journey. There were summer time picnics on the shorefront, gatherings of family, and enjoyable evenings watching the sunset over the West Basin.

The China Lake Association recognizes Irma Simon for her lifelong love and concern for the welfare of China Lake and for the many years of service to the Lake Association. We wish her many more happy years on China Lake!

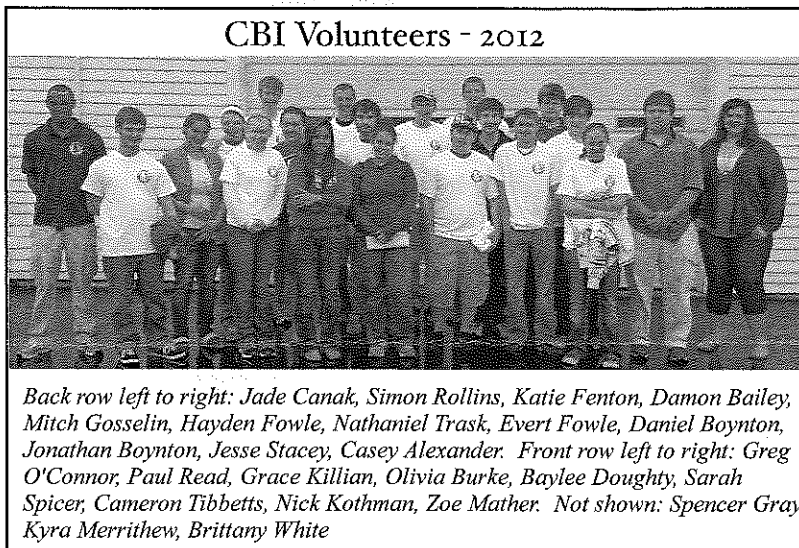


## CRLA Begins Work for 2012 Season

The China Region Lakes Alliance has begun planning for the upcoming summer season by holding its annual refresher course on Courtesy Boat Inspections (CBI). This will be the 8<sup>th</sup> year of prelaunch boat inspections to stop invasive plants from gaining access to China Lake, Webber and Three Mile Ponds. The \$14,000 cost of the CBI program protects hundreds of millions of dollars of property values. Lakes with serious invasive weed problems have seen significant drops in shorefront property values. Twenty local students will participate in this year's CBI Program which is under the direction of Casey Alexander a 2011 Erskine graduate.

Just this spring it was discovered that Great Pond has a serious milfoil problem in the north bay area of the lake. State officials and local volunteers are trying to address this significant problem, and only time will tell how much of an impact the weed will have. We now have Damariscotta Lake to the east and Snow and Great Ponds to the west with milfoil problems as well.

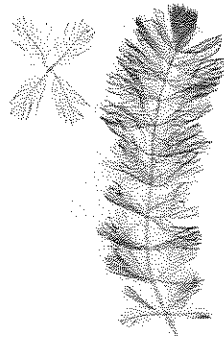
What can lake residents do to help out? Please remove all weeds from your boats before launching! If you have had your boat in any of the 23 lakes in the State with an invasive plant problem, be especially careful. Educate yourself on the invasive plant risks and when launching in China, Webber, or Three Mile Ponds allow the boat inspectors to help you give your boat one final check before launching. One can find good deal of information on line at "Maine VLMP" or by searching "Maine CBI".



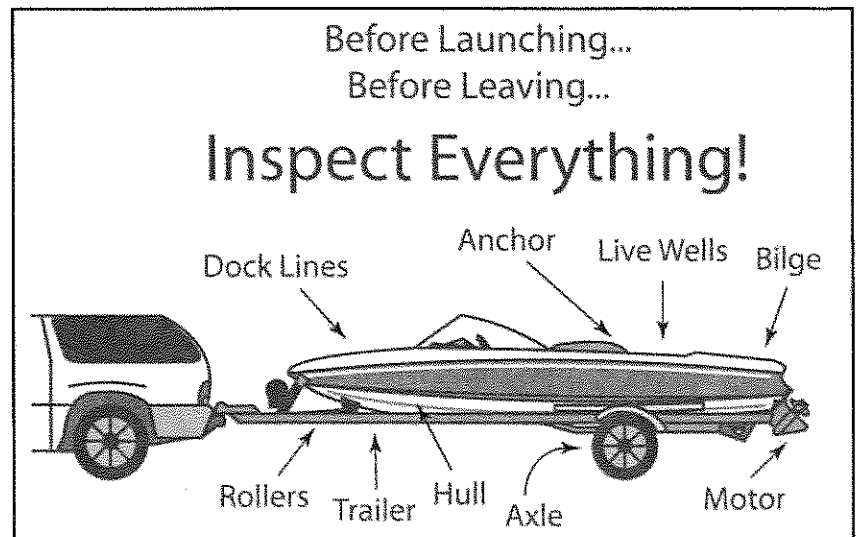
In addition to the CBI Program the CRLA will again be offering area residents erosion control assessments and reduced cost work through the Youth Conservation Corp (YCC). This year's Corp is being headed by YCC veteran and UMF sophomore Gregg O'Connor. The CRLA offers free property owner consultations addressing shorefront erosions, buffer strip improvement work, camp road and culvert maintenance and upgrade issues. The CRLA works closely with the Kennebec Soil and Water Conservation District to provide property owners with a wide range of services. There is still room available for summer projects. To schedule a free evaluation, please email [chinalakesalliance@yahoo.com](mailto:chinalakesalliance@yahoo.com), call Gregg O'Connor at 207-838-0868, or email him at [gregory.oconnor@maine.edu](mailto:gregory.oconnor@maine.edu).

### Eurasian Water Milfoil

Eurasian watermilfoil usually spreads into inland lakes by boats and waterbirds. It forms thick underwater stands of tangled stems and mats of vegetation at the waters surface which crowd out important native plants. It can also interfere with water recreation such as boating, fishing and swimming. A single segment of stem and leaves take root and form a new colony and can over take a lake in 2 years once introduced.

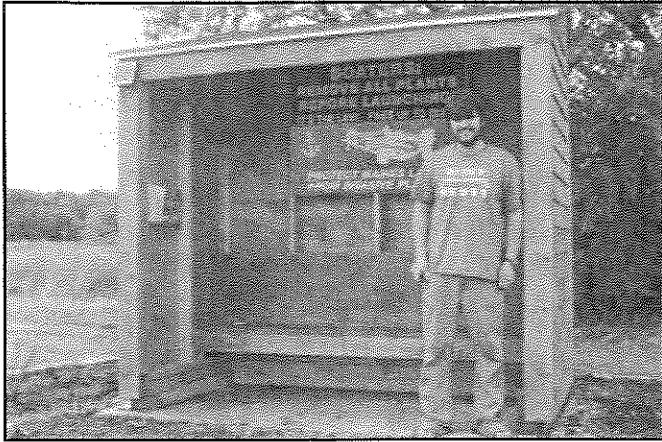


[weedbusters.com](http://weedbusters.com)



graphic from [wildlife.state.nm.us](http://wildlife.state.nm.us)

## China Lake Kiosk



*Travis Pitre stands in front of the new kiosk at the boat landing in China Village.*

There is a new information kiosk at the head of China Lake. This structure will display a new lake map and informational material, as well as provide shelter for the China Boat Inspection (CBI) volunteers. The project was organized by China resident Travis Pitre for his Eagle Scout project. Travis put considerable organizational effort into what became a community wide project. Materials were paid for by the China Lake Association with Tim Axelson providing oversight and assistance on kiosk site location. The talented crew in the "door shop" at Lakeview Lumber, Tim Fletcher and Ron Mattingly, did the construction with labor costs generously donated by Lakeview Lumber. Rick Hayden of the CRLA designed the kiosk, and local farmers Butch Stevens of Stevens Farm and Mike Brown of Meadowbrook Farm provided advice and equipment. Some boater information is already in place. A new lake map is ordered and should be in place this summer.

## China Lake Association Annual Meeting

Saturday, July 28

9-11 am

China Primary School gym

Featured Speaker, Bjorn Lake,  
Consulting Engineer from Kleinschmidt Associates,  
will discuss

*Ways to Address Water Quality Issues in China Lake*

Complimentary refreshments provided by  
*The Green Bean Cafe*

## New Commemorative Coffee Mug



To celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, coffee mugs are being made with the China Lake Association logo on one side and a loon on the other. The mugs will be available at the annual meeting for \$6.00, or can be ordered using the form on this newsletter. Anyone renewing their membership with a donation of \$100 or more will receive a complimentary mug.

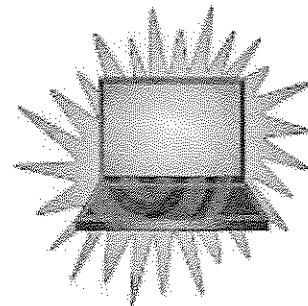
We have also ordered a new supply of China Lake Association t-shirts that can be purchased at the annual meeting as well.



**It's time for a new China Lake Association T-shirt!**

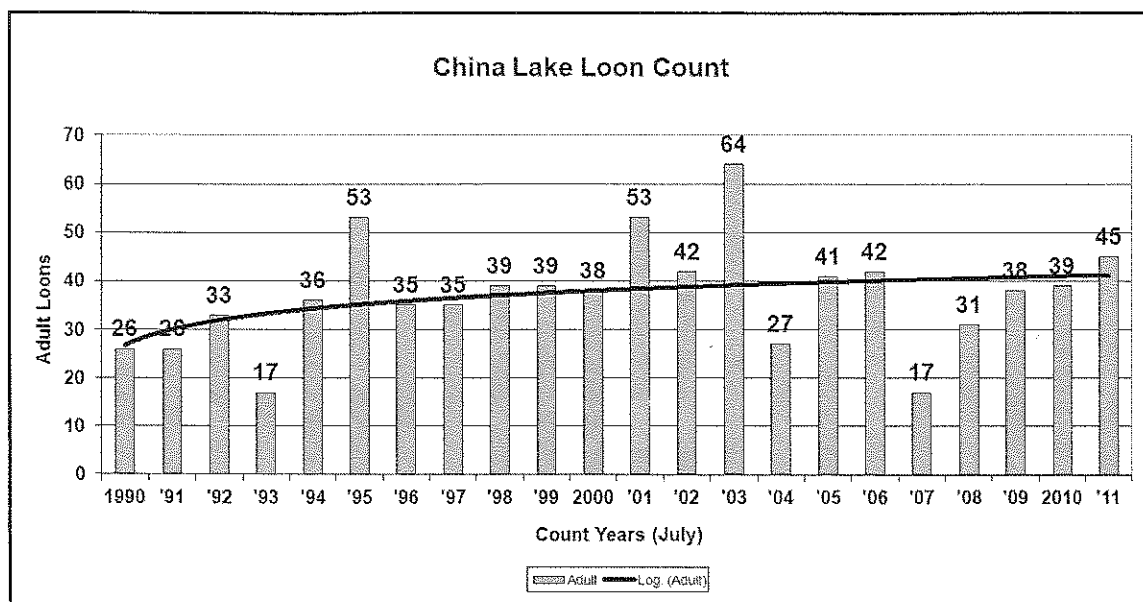
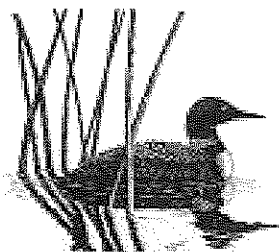
## CLA Website Up and Running!

After much anticipation, the CLA website is up and running at <http://chinalakeassociation.org>. The website is the hard work of CLA directors Ed Bourdeau and Bob O'Connor. While the content is minimal at this point, the goals are to archive all of the material that is in storage, including newsletters, study reports, and photo's, as well as our new lake map, which is being finished up. We are looking for current lake photos from all four seasons that will be displayed on a rotating basis. If you have a photo, send it along to the CLA's email at [info@chinalakeassociation.org](mailto:info@chinalakeassociation.org) or to Bob O'Connor at [bob@mainebob.com](mailto:bob@mainebob.com). If you have any input or suggestions for the website, please let us know.



clipart from [dreamstime.com](http://dreamstime.com)

## Loons Steadily on the Rise



### Things You Can Do to Be Loon-Friendly

- Obey no-wake law within 200 feet of shore
- Use lead-free tackle, good alternatives are made of steel, tin and bismuth.
- Dispose of fishing line so it doesn't tangle up a loon's feet or bill.
- If you live on a lake, use phosphorus-free fertilizer and plant shrubs as a buffer along the shoreline to reduce run-off.
- If you see a loon on a nest, keep your distance and watch with binoculars.
- Keep garbage out of reach of loon egg predators like skunks and raccoons.

<http://maineaudubon.org/wildlife-habitat/the-maine-loon-project/>

The Annual Loon Count on China Lake is part of a state-wide count coordinated by the Maine Audubon Society that occurs each summer on the third Saturday of July from 7:00 - 7:30 am all across the state. In 2011, the count produced an estimate of 3,302 adult loons in the southern half of the state, an all-time high and an increase of about 2% from 2010. The 2011 chick estimate came out to 661, beating the previous high record from 2007 by almost 30%! (<http://maineaudubon.org/wildlife-habitat/the-maine-loon-project/>)

The graph above shows an increasing trend in the loon population in China Lake over the past twenty-two years, with a jump from 36 to 45 (a 15% increase) in adult loons from 2010 to 2011. This is good news for our loon population. We must be doing something right!

This year's count will take place on Saturday, July 21st. If you would like to help, please call Bob O'Connor, who organizes the count for China Lake, at 445-4140. Results of this count along with a loon video will be available at our website: [www.chinalakeassociation.org/loon/](http://www.chinalakeassociation.org/loon/).

## Bass Tournaments

A number of our members have asked when there will be bass tournaments on China Lake during the summer. The Department of Inland Fisheries (IF&W) monitors and regulates the number and type of contests on our lakes. The list below is taken from the IF&W's website: <http://www.maine.gov/ifw/fishing/pdfs/BassByWater061212.pdf>

### CHINA L, CHINA - KENNEBEC

Date	ClubName	Representative	Phone	TournamentType
4/28/2012	Bangor Bass Club	Ron Ruhlin	944-8921	Club/Weigh In
4/29/2012	Outcast Bass Club	Jeremy Von Oesen	649-3665	Club/Weigh In
6/23/2012	TBF of Maine	Dave Austin	522-7315	MDSummer
6/24/2012	TBF of Maine	Dave Austin	522-7315	MDSummer
7/1/2012	Central Maine Bassmasters	Wayne Morey	622-0343	Open/Weigh In
7/7/2012	Mainely Bass	Roger LaFlamme, Jr	229-7110	Open/Weigh In
7/22/2012	Southern Maine Anglers	Kenneth W Tuttle	854-0182	Club/Weigh In
8/26/2012	The Castaways	Enos F. Webster Jr.	207-586-5116	Measure Release
10/7/2012	Yankee Bassmasters	Eric Guimond	749-6457	Open/Weigh In
10/21/2012	Central Maine Bassmasters	Wayne Morey	622-0343	Club/Weigh In

PRSR - STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
WATERVILLE, ME  
04901  
PERMIT NO. 26

China Lake Association  
PO Box 6215  
China Village, ME 04926

