



----- A Progress Report From ----- THE WASHINGTON LAKES ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER NO. 17

SUMMER 2005

MEETING AUG. 18 & TWO LAKE TOURS!

Annual Meeting

The 14th annual meeting of the Washington Lakes Association will be held at 7:00 PM on **Thursday, August 18, 2005** at Medomak Camp Retreat Center (at Senior Camp, the only right hand camp entrance traveling north on Rte. 220). **Everyone is welcome to attend.**

Shippen Bright, Executive Director of Maine Lakes Conservancy, will present a talk about invasive species and the research boat program on Aug. 20 (see right).

Barbara Carney will give a synopsis of the COLA conference keynote speaker's presentation on lake food chains.

The Nominating Committee has offered the following slate of officers as the 2005-2006 Board of Directors:

- President.....Don Grinnell
- Vice-Pres.David Cichowski
- Secretary.....Charlotte Henderson
- Treasurer.....Liz Grinnell
- Directors:.....David Allen
Barbara Carney
Marlene Cohn
Linda Luce
Peter Melgard

All Association members in good standing are eligible for election to the Board. If you would like to be added to the final ballot, please submit your name to Sue Mendleson, Secretary at P.O. Box 225, Washington, ME 04574; 845-2008; or nff@pivot.net. Nominations may also be taken from the floor at the annual meeting.

Dues are Due

Membership dues for 2005-06 are due on or before **Sept. 1, 2005**. Please take a moment to fill out the renewal form found on the back of this newsletter so that we can verify our records are current. Pay your dues at the Annual Meeting or mail them to the treasurer.

It'll change the way you look at lakes!

Washington Lakes Association is offering a special opportunity to as many as 36 members. On Saturday August 20, you can go on a 1-2 hour educational cruise on Washington Pond with Maine Lakes Conservancy Institute (of Nobleboro).

MLCI is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to understanding, preserving and sustaining health and values of Maine's lakes and the communities dependent upon them. They have received many awards as well as regional, national and international attention for their educational programs.

MLCI has a floating classroom (the Melinda Ann, a 30' pontoon boat) with an array of lake science technology. The voyage will point out the complex, fascinating, dynamic and fragile nature of lake ecology. Each person will get hands-on experience using many lake monitoring tools including secchi disc, benthic dredge, underwater camera, hydrophone and plankton sampler and will view search results on a computer screen. They guarantee you'll never look at or think about a lake the same way again.

MLCI will present two programs on Saturday August 20th; one at 10:30 a.m. and the other at 1:00 p.m. [If we have enough sign-ups they'll do a third one at 3 o'clock but that's ONLY if the two earlier ones are filled.] MLCI provides life jackets. They allow participants to bring drinking water but no food is allowed on the boat. The max number for each trip out on the lake is 12 plus two or three crew. The cost is free for current WLA members, and \$10 for non-members, which covers the cost of WLA individual membership.

Charlotte Henderson will coordinate the sign-ups for attending the program. You can contact her at: 845-2661 or charlotte@pivot.net. You can also sign up at the annual meeting.

For more information about MLCI, visit their website: www.mlci.org/

Washington Days Lake Cruises

On Saturday, July 30 from 10AM to 2PM members of the Washington Lakes Association will be offering scenic pontoon boat rides around Washington Pond as part of the Washington Days festivities.

Anyone and everyone are invited to attend. There is no fee. Life jackets will be provided. The rides will last approximately 30 minutes and are offered on a first-come first-serve basis. Pre-teen children must be accompanied by an adult.

If you'd like to join us, go to the public landing off of Rte 105 east of the village. From there you will be shuttled to the launch site in a tractor-pulled hay wagon. Twice the fun!

Lakes Association members will be on hand at the public landing with general information about the organization and lakes in general. Check out the new information kiosk while you are there!

If you cannot attend on Saturday, rides will be offered on Sunday from 2 to 4PM at Med-O-Lark Camp.

Special thanks to Linda & Ron Luce, Andy Mendleson and Jay Stager for offering their boats for this event.

Loon Count



The annual state-wide loon count took place July 16. 2 adults were seen on Crystal Pond, 5 on Washington.

Chicks have been seen this year on Washington Pond, but high water was likely the reason for no surviving chicks on Crystal .

Washington Lakes Association Membership Renewal Form

Name: _____ Individual (\$10) Family (\$15)
Address: _____ Association/Corporation (\$25)
_____ Student (\$5) Sustaining (\$100)
Phone: _____ Add'l Donation:
Email: _____ \$ _____ Lake Testing \$ _____ general

Please complete this form so that our records are current. Please use the mailing address you prefer to receive all WLA correspondence.

Make checks payable to the Washington Lakes Association and send this form and your dues payment to

Barbara Carney, Treasurer, 4 Liberty Road, Washington, ME 04574.

Sport Fisheries Changing in Washington

by David Allen

Regional fisheries biologists have confirmed that our sport fishing in Washington is changing. Biologists have been monitoring Washington Pond and Crystal Lake for many years, and several changes have been noted.

Both ponds have significant populations of smallmouth bass and pickerel along with the usual yellow perch and sunfish. Those fisheries have been augmented for many years with stockings of brown trout, which have attracted anglers both in winter and summer.

Though both ponds provide baitfish as forage for these species, neither pond has a proliferation of baitfish or other feed that would produce fast growth in the game species. In fact, growth rates for game fish seem to be below the range hoped for by biologists.

Biologists tried to improve the situation in the 1960's by stocking crawfish in Crystal Lake, but with only minimal success. In 2004, they made an experimental stocking of smelt eggs at the inlet to Washington Pond and hope to try again in the future. Any information on the success of this stocking would be appreciated.

Eels also reside in both ponds after making the trip up the Medomak River from the Sargasso Sea where all eels on the east coast originate. The Department of Marine Resources will also be stocking alewives in Washington Pond this year. It's unknown whether they can make it past several beaver dams to Crystal Lake.

Electrofishing in 1999 revealed that someone had illegally stocked largemouth bass in Crystal Lake a few years earlier. Those fish have now become established. Last year, as a result of improved hatchery capacity in Palermo, the Inland Fisheries

and Wildlife Department started stocking brook trout in both lakes. The department does not expect either trout species to reproduce here, however.

Biologists are always interested in information about the fisheries in both ponds. Specifically, they'd like to know if largemouth bass have reached Washington Pond, if folks are catching any brook trout, and if smelts have become established. Regional fisheries biologist Jim Lucas can be reached at the Sidney headquarters at 547-5316.

From the President

by Don Grinnell

Your Lakes Association has had a busy and productive year. It started with Holly Stone and Medomak Camp hosting our annual meeting last August. The meeting was highlighted by an excellent presentation on local wildflowers. We tried twice this spring to conduct a wildflower walk, but the rainy May and June forced cancellation both times.

Thanks to Pete and Steve Melgard we will soon have an information kiosk erected at the town boat landing on Washington Pond. One is planned for Crystal Lake next year.

Information packets were assembled and delivered to each waterfront home and camp owner on both lakes.

We will also be active during Washington Days thanks to the generosity of Andy Mendleson and Ron and Linda Luce, we will be offering pontoon boat rides on Washington Pond.

Lastly I would like to express the association's gratitude to Sue Mendleson and Barbara Carney who are stepping down after serving many years as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Their dedication to the association often goes unnoticed but is truly appreciated.

Boating Laws Reminder

Be a safe boater this season by obeying the following boating laws:

- A Coast Guard approved PFD (personal floating device) must be on board for each passenger in the boat.
- Children 10 and younger must be wearing a PFD at all times.
- Boats must make headway speed only within 200 feet of the shoreline – this includes the shorelines of islands – unless starting with or dropping off a skier.
- Children under 12 are not permitted to operate a motorboat unless under the supervision of a person 16 years old or older.
- Rules regarding fire extinguishers, lights, and signaling devices vary depending on the size of your boat. Know the boating rules.
- Personal watercraft
- Personal watercraft may not be operated between sunset and sunrise.
- All passengers in a personal watercraft must be wearing an approved PFD.
- The operator of a personal watercraft must be at least 16 years of age.
- Jet pump propelled boats of 14 feet or less are banned on Crystal Lake.
- In addition to these safety rules, the following laws apply:
- It is illegal to harass or molest waterfowl or other wildlife while operating a watercraft.
- It is illegal to operate a watercraft in a manner that is imprudent for conditions or that threatens the safety of or inconveniences other boaters, piers, docks or the shoreline either directly or through wash or wake.
- Please stay away from loons and loon nesting areas on our lakes. Loon populations are threatened by development, pollution, and boating activity on our lakes and ponds.

Copies of the Maine Boating Laws are available at the town office.