



# COUNTY NEWS

## Maine County Commissioners Association Newsletter

### In this issue:

- NACo-New Campaign Will Focus on Keeping Mentally Ill Out of Jail
- Walk for Autism in Penobscot
- Totally Trades Conference
- Drug Take Back Day
- Children's Advocate Award
- Maine County Day

"Counties are working to reduce the number of people with behavioral health and substance abuse needs in jails across the country," said NACo Executive Director Matt Chase. "This cutting-edge initiative will help counties focus on results and take their efforts to the next level. It will support action-oriented, comprehensive strategies to provide needed services in appropriate settings."

The prevalence of mental illness in jails is now three-to-six times higher than in the general population. Currently, people with mental illnesses number more than 2 million in jails. And counties are spending more for mental health services in jails and getting worse results than community-based programs. Lack of appropriate care means longer jail stays, higher bills for counties and a higher likelihood of recidivism. The initiative will convene representatives from organizations involved in the issue, including county sheriffs, judges, jail administrators, treatment providers, and mental health and substance abuse counselors.



[~Click here to read the full article by Charlie Ban](#)

## Walk for Autism

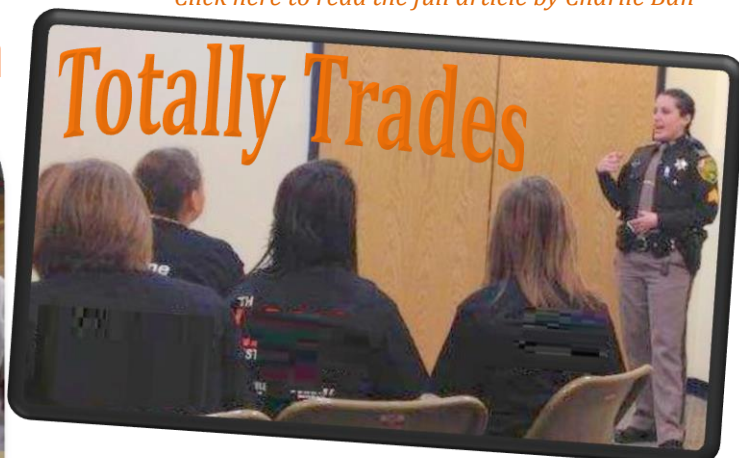


The Penobscot County Sheriff's Office and Penobscot Regional Communications Center were thrilled to participate in this weekend's 13th annual "Walk for Autism" held on April 26th. Deputies, Corrections Officers and Communication Operators conducted Iris scan and wandering program registrations. This incredible event helped spread awareness and bring hope and support to Maine families. Autism is a developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. It is the result of a neurological disorder that affects the functioning of the brain, and occurs in approximately one out of every 68 births. Autism is four times more prevalent in boys than girls and knows no racial, ethnic or social boundaries. [~Click here to learn more about autism.](#)

### 2015 Children's Advocate Award



Members of the Sheriff administration attended an award ceremony at the Blaine House in Augusta sponsored by the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault and the Maine Network of Children's Advocacy Centers. Androscoggin Detective Sergeant Maurice Drouin received the "Children's Advocacy Award" for his dedication and outstanding work in investigating child physical and sexual abuse. Sgt. Drouin was one of four recipients of this award and the only one from Androscoggin County.



Sgt. Erica Pelletier was a presenter in Presque Isle at the invitation of Northern Maine Community College and Maine Centers for Women, Work and Community. She is a University of Maine at Fort Kent graduate and has been a full-time police officer since 2007. The presentation was for the Totally Trades Conference, which is a day-long event designed to encourage young women to consider careers in trades and technology fields traditionally dominated by men. According to Women, Work and Community they anticipated over 100 students from schools throughout Aroostook County to participate today. The Aroostook Sheriff's Office was happy to take part in helping young women explore their many career options and hope some will consider a career in law enforcement. Suzanne Senechal-Jandreau, Aroostook County WWC Regional Manager says, "We give girls a hands-on workshop experience to spark their interest and raise awareness about a career field that they may not have previously considered, as well as provide female role models – women who can lead by example, having already succeeded in pursuing work that traditionally is viewed as 'man's work'."

## Drug Take Back Day



The Maine Sheriffs' Association (MSA) conducted their first "Drug Take-Back" on Saturday, April 25, 2015. The MSA organized the statewide effort when the federal Drug Enforcement Administration's Take Back Initiative concluded. Maine's 16 sheriffs headed up their county's drug take back efforts and the MSA ensured the collected medications were picked up and destroyed. With the help of Hartt Transportation, the sheriffs delivered 23,520 pounds of unused medication to ECO Maine's waste to energy plant in Portland.

## Maine County Day

National County Government Month is celebrated each April by the nation's counties to raise public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of county government. MCCA held "Maine County Day" on April 22nd in the Hall of Flags at the State House. Counties brought displays and handouts showing what is special about their county. [~Click here to check out the pictures from the event and watch a video about how others celebrated.](#)

