



# COUNTY NEWS

## Maine County Commissioners Association Newsletter

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### Waldo County Boasts 2014 Budget Decrease

The Waldo County Commissioners are very pleased to report that the County's 2014 budget is 2.2% lower than the 2013 budget, due in large part to the success of the County's self-funded health insurance plan through Meritain Health. The commissioners attribute some of the recent health plan cost savings to the success of the Waldo County Wellness Committee and Wellness Program which started in 2012. Over one-third of the Waldo County employees have enrolled at local fitness centers with matched funding from the County health plan.

[Click here to read more.](#)



### Aroostook Leaves Behind a Call Sharing Agreement

In January, Aroostook County Sheriff's Deputies will resume patrolling all of the county on a daily basis. Since 2002, the Sheriff's Deputies and State Troopers were separated into five geography-based patrol areas. While the agencies cooperated and worked together, it was difficult to regularly collaborate on investigations and special projects. According to Chief Deputy Sheriff Darrell Crandall, "Without question, this will increase the likelihood of our being able to prevent crises and will also improve our ability to deter and solve crime." This is a positive thing for the Sheriff's Office, the State Police and most importantly the people of Aroostook County. [Click here for the full press release.](#)



**"Leaders come in many forms, with many styles and diverse qualities. There are quiet leaders and leaders one can hear in the next county. Some find strength in eloquence, some in judgment, some in courage."**

~ John W. Gardner

**GOOD NEWS!** PILT funding has been extended for one year as a fully funded mandatory entitlement program. The Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program provides payments to counties and other local governments to offset losses in tax revenues due to the presence of tax exempt federal land in their jurisdictions. [To read more about this decision, click here.](#)

### On the State of the Union

**Address:** "NACo was pleased to hear President Obama identify county government priority issues such as transportation funding and economic development as part of his plan to help our county economies grow," said NACo President Linda Langston.

[Read more here.](#)



### 2014 Executive Committee for MCCA

In the Annual Meeting on January 8th, Commissioner William Blodgett was voted in as MCCA's President, Commissioner, Peter Baldacci as Vice President, and Commissioner Thomas Coward as Secretary-Treasurer for 2014.

Many thanks to the 2013 Executive Committee for all of their efforts and achievements made in the past year!

### The New Jail Bill

The joint task force to study the BOC completed its work and presented the final report to the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee in January. There is a tentatively scheduled discussion of the report for early February. The proposed draft has not been officially presented to the Committee, but will be soon. There may be parts added or subtracted from the legislation that will be determined through the political process.

Thank you to David Flannagan for his tireless and donated efforts that brought the members of the task force together.

### Progress for Franklin County in 2013

In a year-end report, Sheriff Scott Nichols highlighted some of the many accomplishments made in 2013:

- A new program has been established for rural roads and back woods security checks increasing the presence of deputies in areas that didn't see routine patrol activity in years past.
- A grant has been obtained from Homeland Security paying for reconditioned Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) giving deputies the ability to write their reports at the scene of an incident.
- Deputies have evaluated school safety plans, participated in school reaction drills, and started an ongoing school visitation program throughout the county.
- A new communications center has been completed and will be ready for occupation by the new Director, Stan Wheeler and his excellent staff by March of 2014.

[Click here to read the full report and plans for 2014.](#)

