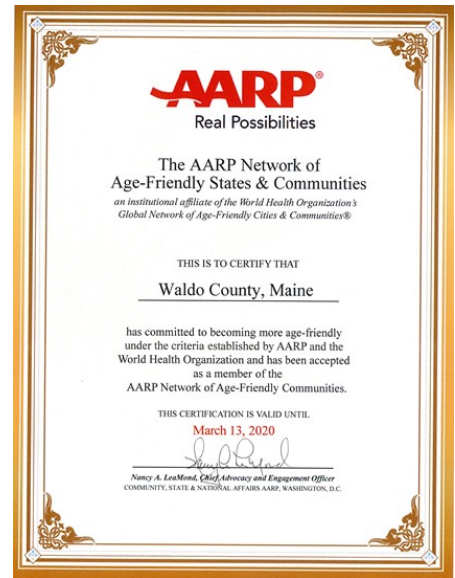


WALDO COUNTY FIRST MAINE COUNTY TO RECEIVE AARP'S "AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY" DISTINCTION

On March 13, 2018, the County of Waldo became the first Maine County to receive the "Age-Friendly County" distinction as part of AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Counties and Communities. An age-friendly county encourages people of all ages to be as actively engaged in the civic, social, and economic life of the community as they want to be and ensures that residents have the resources they need to live safely and securely in their communities. In a livable county, policies, services, settings, and structures encourage people to remain as active as they want to be at any age and to live life to their own satisfaction regardless of individual challenges. Because aging is a lifelong process, a livable county is not just a wonderful place to grow old, it is a great place to live, work, do business, and play at any age.



Betty Johnson- Ms. Johnson is currently the District 1 Commissioner of Waldo County. She brings a governmental perspective and is leading the organization in the construction of charter. Talented at graphic design, she created the AWWC logo.



Age-Friendly counties also:

- ◆ **Encourage their cities and towns** to provide opportunities for employment and volunteer work that maximize the contributions that older residents make to economic and community development.
- ◆ **Have an advantage** when business of all kinds are thinking of where they want to locate network encourages states, counties, cities, towns and rural areas to prepare for the rapid aging of the U.S. population. The network encourages counties and communities to take action and pay increased attention to the environmental, economic and social features that encourage greater age integration and diversity and create a community that supports residents from the cradle through retirement.
- ◆ **Promote active and healthy lifestyles** and make sure that residents know about the resources they need to live safely, securely, and independently in their county and communities.

In 2016, local non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations and residents of Waldo County formed a committee called Aging Well in Waldo County (AWWC). This initiative later partnered with Waldo County General Hospital's outreach program, Journey to Health. Representatives of the committee met with the Waldo County Commissioners. County Commissioner Betty Johnson volunteered to assist and now serves on the AWWC Board of Directors and as Treasurer. The County Commissioners submitted a letter of support for Aging Well in Waldo County, allowing them to apply to AARP for funds to perform an assessment of County residents over age 50. The grant funds were received from AARP and the assessment was completed. When the County of Waldo received certification as an Age-Friendly County, Aging Well in Waldo County was now eligible to apply for and receive additional grant funding to create an Action Plan for the County residents. This Action Plan was recently completed and released. To read about Aging Well in Waldo County's assessment and action plan reports, go to <http://agingwellinwaldocounty.org> and click on the correct report.

Aging Well in Waldo County

The mission of Aging Well in Waldo County is to mobilize our communities to identify and address the needs of our aging friends and neighbors, striving for inclusive, supportive and safe communities for all.



AARP Maine State Director Lori Parham congratulates Jan Dodge, Chair of Aging Well in Waldo County and Triad volunteer/committee member Sheriff Jeffrey Trafton on Waldo County becoming the first Maine County to receive the Age-Friendly County certification from AARP.

