



# COUNTY NEWS

## Maine County Commissioners Association Newsletter



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### Five Counties Awarded Federal Grants

Five counties were awarded grants of up to \$150,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to create a collaborative county approach to **reduce the prevalence of individuals with mental illnesses in jail**, plan and implement a criminal justice and mental health or co-occurring collaboration, or expand upon or improve a well-established collaboration plan. The grant is part of the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHP) which provides funding to facilitate collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, and mental health and substance abuse treatment systems. Grant funds under this track can be used to support a targeted analysis to measure the prevalence of people with mental illnesses in the local jail, a review of existing community resources, and identification and initial implementation of policy and practice changes to minimize contact or deeper involvement of individuals with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders in the criminal justice system. *~Click here to read more of this blog by NACo's Program Manager Nastassia Walsh. ~Click here for grant opportunities.*



# SOMERSET COUNTY



Somerset County has much to offer residents, businesses and visitors with a thriving economy and activities for all ages. There are 33 communities, as well as 82 Unorganized Territories in Somerset County that offer the tranquility of a rural lifestyle coupled with many of the amenities of a more suburban setting in their four largest communities. In recent news, Tammy Barker was named the winner of the Director of the Year Award from the Atlantic Chapter of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials. She was presented her award at the annual Atlantic APCO Conference in Vermont. Tammy was selected to receive the Award from a group of nominated Directors, Deputy Directors, Operation Managers, and Supervisors from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. This Award recognizes the hard work and commitment she demonstrates for Somerset County on a daily basis.

**TAMMY BARKER**

**ATLANTIC APCO**  
Leaders in Public Safety Communications



## Spirit of America 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Awards Night



Casey Drake created a veterans memorial, Tyler Maloon saved a man's life, and Mary Richardson has been Secret Santa. What do these folks have in common? They're among the 2015 Spirit of America award winners honored for outstanding community service by Androscoggin, Kennebec, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Somerset and Waldo counties. On October 21<sup>st</sup>, Somerset hosted the county's third annual Spirit of America Awards Night recognizing 42 recipients with awards for their volunteerism. (Please see the picture above.) Every year the Spirit of America Foundation Tribute is presented in the name of 100+ Maine communities. For information about how your county can become involved with Spirit of America, contact Commissioner Amy Fowler or call Bruce Flaherty at 622-7311.

## Somerset County Gets a New Patrol Dog



*In this photo to the left, Corporal David Cole poses with 15-month old Kojo, pronounced "Coy-Ooh", a Belgian malinois purchased with the approval of the County Commissioners.*

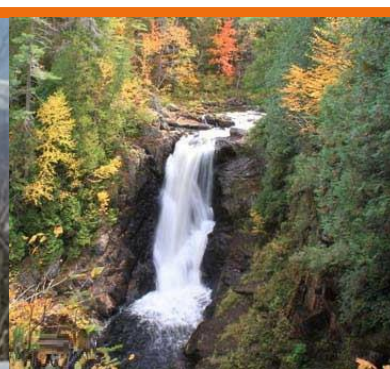
Somerset County commissioners had a four-legged visitor during a recent meeting, Kojo, the county's newest patrol dog. Commissioners had agreed to buy Kojo, who will replace Ruger, who is retiring as the sheriff department's tracking and drug-search dog. "He's only had one training session so far," County Administrator Dawn DiBlasi told commissioners. "He has a ways to go." Kojo is being trained in basic obedience and will start training for tracking and building searches with his handler, Cpl. Cole. The county's current tracking dog, "Ruger, is 10 years old and will be transitioned into retirement. Ruger is a trained drug-sniffing dog and will continue to be used in drug searches during Kojo's training," Sheriff Lancaster said.

Commissioners were also scheduled to approve the hiring of new patrol deputies for the Madison Division of the sheriff's department. Madison police officers now are operating under the oversight of the sheriff's department after a one-year contract between the town and county went into effect in July providing Madison a cost savings of \$130,000 per year. *~Click here for the article by Doug Harlow.*



## Somerset Farm and Garden

The Somerset County Jail operates a garden/pig farm program utilized to supplement the jail's kitchen. The current goals are to expand the jail's storage capability for locally grown food products, set up an apple orchard using existing tree stock, set up a blueberry patch, and continue with the Pig Program. The Pig farm provides work for inmates, improves the land and augments the jail's food service with meat. 23 of the pigs have been slaughtered and provided 7800 pounds of ground meat, which if purchased at current cost would cost the jail \$15,000. The costs of the pigs, building the pig tractor, and additional feed was \$3500, resulting in a savings to the Jail Food Budget of \$11,500. *~Click here for more about inmate programs in Somerset County.*



November is the first issue in a series of MCCA Newsletter editions featuring a single county. If you would like to see your county featured in an upcoming newsletter, please contact Lauren Haven at 623-4697.

← Moxie Falls