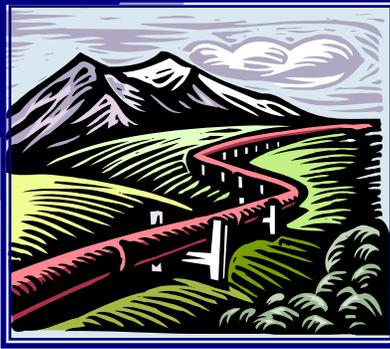


# What's In The Somerset County

# PIPELINE

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4 MAY -

NEWSLETTER DATE: MAY - JUNE 2009



"A NEW LOOK" AT THE SOMERSET COUNTY COURTHOUSE DUE TO THE WORK OF THE MASTERS GARDEN CLUB AND THE SOMERSET COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION.

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## Somerset County Budget Update FY2009-2010

The Public Hearing on the Somerset County Budget was held on Wednesday, July 1st at 7:00 p.m. in the Superior Courtroom. Meeting Minutes can be obtained by visiting the county's website at: [www.somersetcountycommissioners.com](http://www.somersetcountycommissioners.com). The Somerset County Budget Committee's proposed County Operational Budget is \$3,858,497, which is \$84,420 under the tax cap. The Budget Committee took no action after the Public Hearing closed and postponed any action on the budget until July 20th. The County is currently operating on an interim budget, pursuant to MRSA 30§898, which may not exceed 80% of the previous year's budget.

The County Commissioners, at their meeting held on July 1st, voted to apply the \$1.2 million of the unspent jail bond to reduce the jail debt service assessment to the towns in FY10. In addition, the County Commissioners voted to apply the funds received from the sale of the old Jail, which overall results in a 4.5% decrease in the total County tax for FY10. The total County assessment consists of the Jail Operational Budget, the Debt Service Budget and the County Operational Budget.

The Budget Committee is looking for additional monies to offset the County Operational Budget which is up 10% due to the loss of the Jail revenue. The Budget Committee expressed its frustration on not having any control over the Jail Operational Budget, which is the largest budget assessed to the towns, and have targeted reductions in the General County Operational Budget because it is the only budget it has control over. Several departments within the County are very concerned that their departments will suffer due to the cost of this new jail.

## Governor's Volunteer Service Award for Exemplary Service for 50 Years

### Service in Somerset County 4-H as a 4-H Leader

This is Eleanor Pooler's 50th year as a 4-H Leader and her 43rd as the 4-H Leader of Solon Pine Tree Club, the longest running club in Somerset County. She has worked with three generations of Solon youth demonstrating solid leadership training, demonstration skills, and pride in ones accomplishments. She and her husband, Rance, (in his 40th year as assistant leader) have set a great example of community involvement and service. Eleanor received this important award from Governor Baldacci at a ceremony in the Hall of Flags at the State Capitol on April 21st. Eleanor has also been named by the Skowhegan State Fair to the Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2008. She is currently President of the Somerset County 4-H Leaders Association and chairman of the 4-H Day Parade at the SSF. Her club meets the second Saturday morning at the Solon Fire Station. Guests are welcome. Congratulations to Eleanor for her well deserved honor.

## REGISTRY OF DEEDS - "Deeds Goes Green"



In an effort to become greener and to save money the Somerset Registry of Deeds is going paperless. Well sort of... In the last few years the Registry has tried to reduce its use of paper to save money and the earth. Last Year, the Registry stopped printing books and all new documents are available digitally on computer. Just this week a new step was taken to send transfers to towns and all bills electronically through email.

Diane M. Godin, Register, reports there was very little resistance from the towns and brief discussions with a few Town Managers made it easy to see the value and savings to all involved. "The first month was definitely a trial process but I hope the towns feel it worked well and will email us if it didn't. We would really like their feedback. Some towns do not have computers and or email but just a very few still have to be printed and mailed. "There's always room for improvement." says Godin "In this economy it is irresponsible not to use the technology that is available when it saves money. We now have technological capabilities and a superb IT Department that allows us to work smarter and more efficiently."

## Somerset County Communications Center

Somerset County Communications Center has experienced an interesting evolution over the past 18 months. In December of 2007, the Center began contracting with municipalities in Kennebec County to provide 9-1-1 call answering services for their residents. Initially, 5 municipalities, including the City of Waterville, contracted service for 9-1-1 call answering. Over the course of the next 18 months, 15 more municipalities in Kennebec County sought 9-1-1 services through our Center. The Center currently has contracts with 20 Kennebec County municipalities to provide a combination of 9-1-1 and/or EMD services. These municipalities range in size from 980 residents in the Town of Rome to over 18,500 residents in the City of Augusta. The Center is currently providing 9-1-1 services to over 90,000 full-time residents in Kennebec County in addition to the entire population of Somerset County. With these contracts comes revenue for providing the service. In the FY10 budget proposal there is \$117,000.00 in revenue projections for the services the Center is providing. In respect to the increase in the workload and call volume being generated, the County has requested the addition of 2 dispatchers to the current staffing level of 14. The cost of these 2 new positions will be approximately \$65,000.00, leaving a revenue surplus of about \$52,000.00 applied to the General Fund of the County. This is a marked increase in revenue from years past, as prior to the contracts with Kennebec municipalities, no revenue was generated, the entire Communications budget was funded through County taxes. While this seems like a small amount of revenue for the County, we must remember that Somerset Communications is only providing 9-1-1 call answering

## Somerset County Sheriff's Department - Operation Stone Garden



The 6 passenger all terrain vehicle pictured was obtained by the Somerset County Sheriff's Department Criminal Division recently, via Operation Stone Garden funds. Operation Stone Garden is a government funded grant, which pays for overtime & equipment, to be used for border security details, throughout Somerset County. The Law Enforcement Division conducts weekly details throughout the County, all geared towards enhancing border security.

The cost for the 2009 Polaris Ranger Crew Cab ATV, with trailer, along with associated fuel costs for said ATV, was approximately \$18,000.00, which

## SOMERSET COUNTY JAIL - WORKREADY PROGRAM



*Somerset County Jail and MSAD 54 Adult Ed are pleased to announce the following graduated from the jail's first Work-Ready class:*

*Sara Pontbriand, Alison Roberts, Joshua Amenkowitz (released prior to ceremony), Benjamin Grignon, Hassan Hood, Pierre Boucher, Bradley Wilcox, Jason Burnham and Joshua Hartley*

*WorkReady is a program designed to teach self-confidence, work skills, interview skills, and self-assessment skills in an intensive 60 hour curriculum.*

*This is a program called Work Ready, SAD #54 and the Somerset County Jail Programs department put this program into effect with the approval of Sheriff DeLong. It helps inmates in finding employment once released from the Somerset County Jail and aids in keeping them out of Jail.*

*Students developed resumes and cover letters as well as participated in a marathon interview day (9 interviews in a single day) with local business men and women.*

*Sara Pontbriand and Joshua Hartley gave presentations along with the guest speaker, Darrel Mitchell, Business Manager for MSAD 54. Certificates of completion were handed out by Major David Allen, Jail Administrator; Patte Bowman, MSAD 54 Adult Ed Director, and Kathleen Lewia, WorkReady Instructor.*

### County Government Day at the Statehouse

**AUGUSTA, MAINE** Somerset County Government sent several County employees to the statehouse in Augusta to showcase Somerset County Government to legislators, staff, and the public with displays of department paraphernalia such as badges, pencils, and fliers explaining each department function. Somerset was one of 16 Maine County governments to send folks to this event. It was a day of getting reacquainted with each other and meeting many legislators throughout the day.



County Governments Nationwide chose a Green Theme and Somerset County highlighted the theme by handing out tomato seedlings from Backyard Farms in Madison and pine seedlings provided by Plum Creek. It was a wonderful opportunity for Somerset County to show off some of its finest resources.



## Building Healthy Relationships Through Effective Governing

Somerset County Courthouse  
41 Court Street  
Skowhegan, ME 04976

Phone: 474-9861—Fax: 474-7405

Email: [somerset@somersetcounty-me.org](mailto:somerset@somersetcounty-me.org)

### About our Website:

At [www.somersetcountycommissioners.com](http://www.somersetcountycommissioners.com) you will find links to all County Departments and their web sites; Commissioner meeting schedule, agendas, and minutes; Budget Committee information; Charter Commission Committee information; Request for proposals; and Employment opportunities; and other upcoming events.

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:

### Departmental Address & Phone Directory

#### Located at 41 Court St. Skowhegan

County Administrator - 474-9861

County Treasurer/Finance - 474-5776

Registry of Deeds - 474-3421

Registry of Probate - 474-3322

Economic Development - 474-0166

District Attorney's Office - 474-2423

Somerset Technical Services— 858-4261

#### Located at 8 County Drive Skowhegan

Emergency Management - 474-6788

Telecommunications - 474-6386

#### Located at 131 East Madison RD Madison

Somerset County Jail - 474-9591

Sheriff's Department - 474-9591