

Winter 2020

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Letter from the President

Hello to the membership!

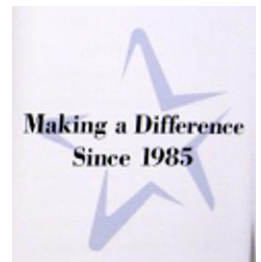
I hope everyone is staying warm, safe and productive this winter. I've been warm and safe so far and like Meat Loaf said, "two outta three ain't bad". Plenty of snow and cold for everyone so at least we can be reminded that we're in Minnesota.

The MJPS Spring Conference April 28-30 at Arrowwood Resort in Alexandria is still being finalized but the notice and sign up has been sent out. The way it sits right now it's fixin' to be a great training with relevant and impactful speakers on topics that matter to all of us. If you have looked at the Conference schedule so far you will notice that the board decided to eliminate breakout sessions this year. We will have one speaker per time slot so you won't have to choose between two interesting topics and hopefully the networking is off the charts. We welcome feedback to this change at the end of the Conference. Get signed up!

Nominations for Kay Siebrass and Dave Grant awards are now open until March 20th. Please take a moment to nominate yourself for all of the hard work that is done every day. We all love to hear what is going on at other facilities and what is being offered in programming. Please get those nominations in to me ASAP! Also, there will be a couple openings for new MJPS board members that we will vote on this spring. Consider getting involved and sharing your talents and ideas with your fellow programmers. Any questions about being on the board please contact me or anyone else on the board.

Thank you for all you do every day to keep this thing moving. There are no limits to what can be accomplished by a motivated and passionate programmer.

Dustin Naumann, MJPS President



MJPS SPRING CONFERENCE

APRIL 28TH – APRIL 30TH, 2020 - ARROWWOOD IN
ALEXANDRIA,

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

MJPS CONFERENCE AGENDA

[CLICK HERE](#) for the 2020 MJPS Conference Agenda.

ONLINE Registration

[CLICK HERE](#) to register online either for the full conference (\$100 early bird, \$110 regular, or \$120 late) or the daily fee (\$75).

You may either pay with a credit card or by check (by selecting “Mail My Check.”) Once your online registration is completed, you will receive two emails: 1. A confirmation email and 2. either a receipt for your credit card or an invoice to submit for payment so a check may be mailed in. This is the only invoice you will receive.

Online Registration is the MSA preferred registration method.

(You may also go directly to the MSA Events page to register for any MSA events.)

PAPER REGISTRATION:

[CLICK HERE](#) for Registration Form to email or fax in.

Thursday, April 30, 2020

Awards Luncheon

11:30 am

For the Dave Grant Program of the Year Award, [CLICK HERE](#) for the criteria and nomination form.

For the Kay Siebrass Program of the Year Award, [CLICK HERE](#) for the criteria and nomination form.

NOMINATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO Dustin Naumann at dustin.naumann@millelacs.mn.gov by 5:00 pm on March 20, 2020.

ARROWWOOD RESORT REGISTRATION

Please note that meals are included in the Hotel Registration

[CLICK HERE](#) to register for accommodations and meals at Arrowwood Resort for attendees (for both those staying at the resort and commuters). Please email or fax the completed form directly to Arrowwood Resort.

Notable Women of Austin, Minnesota

Mary Davidson, Mower County Jail Program Coordinator, gives lots of credit to the staff with whom she works. “When you see someone who works at a jail, thank them,” Mary advises. It is challenging to work with such a diverse group of people and to keep the peace. Many inmates have a severe and persistent mental illness along with co-occurring chemical use addictions. There is also a potential for violence or a medical emergency to occur at any given moment. Working in a jail environment is very stressful emotionally and physically for correctional staff, having to be “on”, that is alert, every minute of their shift in order to insure the safety of themselves, their fellow co-workers, and the inmates in their care. “Even missing seeing a dropped paper clip can result in an inmate using it as a weapon or as a tool for self-harm. You have to be aware of everything!”

Mary comes from a law enforcement family. Her father was a Minnesota State Trooper for 25 years and her two brothers have both been in police work. Mary’s first job in law enforcement was here in Austin. Twenty-seven years ago, she was enrolled at Alexandria Technical College, near her home in Osakis, preparing for work in the hospitality industry and working part-time in a nursing home. Her brother, who is now a retired Austin Police Officer, told her of the job opening at the Mower County jail working with male and female inmates. She got the job. “To put it in perspective of how long ago that was,” Mary said, “So far I’ve worked under four different Sheriffs and three Jail Administrators.”

As plans for the new Justice Center were being made in 2010, Mary was part of the transition team preparing to go from the old linear style jail to a new direct supervision type of jail management. That meant there were no longer going to be any bars in the new jail and the staff were going to be working directly in the housing units with the inmates. It was also at this time that Mary was promoted to Program Coordinator to manage the inmate program department.

Mary emphasizes that the first priority of the jail is always safety and security. But, incarceration can get boring sometimes and inmates need constructive things to do to occupy their time or they will occupy staff’s time...in a bad way.

In the old jail, there had been only one make-shift classroom and 5 volunteers. The new jail was built with two classrooms specifically designed for inmate use. Mary spent hours searching on the internet how best to take on this new job. She also began to network with other jails to learn about their programs. Mary became a member of Minnesota Jail Programs & Services (MJPS) which is a division of the Minnesota Sheriff’s Association. MJPS connects all the programmers together in the State of Minnesota. This organization was very helpful in Mary’s search for “best practices” and support. Currently, Mary is serving her last term on the MJPS Executive Board as Past President.

Part of Mary’s job is to find, screen, train, and support volunteers. Today, the jail has about 30 active community volunteers and plenty of programming for the inmates. The programs are designed to challenge participants to accept responsibility for their behavior and to take deliberate steps towards change. The goal is to provide inmates with the tools necessary to help them stay out of jail once they have returned to our community. Key topics include: personal relationships, criminal thinking and behavior, controlling negative emotions, chemical dependency, and parenting.

Community volunteers and agencies have really come together to support the jail’s mission. Meaningful inmate programs would not be possible without their support. The jail partners with local churches and other agencies like the Parenting Resource Center, Crime Victim’s Resource Center, and our local AA club, to name a few.

The jail has most recently partnered with probation officers from Correctional Services who facilitate a cognitive behavioral program called “Decision Points” that is making a promising impact. Mary says the inmates love this program because it focuses on their own real life situations and it helps them learn to make decisions for a more favorable outcome.

Last year, Mower County was awarded the 2019 MJPS Kay Siebrass Program of the Year award for its partnership with Recovery Is Happening (RIH) from Rochester. RIH is Minnesota’s leading non-profit, full service Recovery Community Organization. It was through MJPS that Mary was introduced to its founder and Executive Director, Tiffany Hunsley. Tiffany’s story is remarkable and inspiring. She personally battled and persevered through substance use challenges herself and made the decision in 2011 to dedicate her life to serving others.

RIH trains former addicts now living a life of recovery to become Peer Recovery Specialists to help those currently struggling. The jail has two Peer Recovery Specialists that meet with the inmates in jail and then helps them get connected to the right resources when they get out of jail. Mary says that Austin’s recovery community is really starting to flourish due, in part; to the addition of the work that RIH is doing in our community.

Also last year, the Mower County Sheriff’s Office hosted its first jail volunteer appreciation party in May 2019. “It was a blessing to be a part of it,” Mary said. Five former inmates came to say thank you to the volunteers for the help they received while they were in jail. One of those former inmates is now employed by RIH as a Peer Recovery Specialist and helping those that are currently incarcerated transition into a life of recovery. “It doesn’t get any better than that!” It is times like this that keeps Mary going at her extraordinarily difficult job. Small signs that her work has made a difference in lives, plus the philosophy that “Wherever you are, do the best you can” are the ways that she finds strength, along with a strong faith and a supportive family.

“I certainly don’t do this work alone,” Mary said. “It’s thanks to the jail staff for their hard work in keeping our community safe and to the volunteers for their dedication to making a difference in the lives of others”.

Thank you, Mary Davidson, and to your colleagues for doing this highly specialized and challenging work that you do to make Austin a safer and better place.

Written by: Carolyn Bogott
Austin Daily Herald newspaper: March 2020



The goal of the forum is to provide a place to collect feedback on various topics relating to jail programs and services so that we can all benefit from our collective knowledge and avoid reinventing the wheel on the most effective policies, procedures and practices in our field.

We are setting up a “Programmer’s 101” area that will include forms, contact lists, and other useful information pertaining to jail programs. Please consider sharing some of your great work with and for others.

How to Use the Forum

As of last October, the MJPS forum is available on the MSA website at www.mnsheriffs.org. Navigate to the Divisions of the MSA section on the left sides and select MN Jail Programs and Services. Click on the MJPS Forum to view the discussion board. At the top you will be able to login or register if it is your first time posting to the board.

MN Jail Programs and Services (MJPS)

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General Discussion					Create Thread
<< Prev 1 Next >>		Select ▾		Search... <input type="text"/>	
	Subject	Created By	Replies	Views	Last Post
	Welcome to the MJPS Forum!	Admin	2	44	by marydavidson Oct 16, 2018 at 11:24am

Legend

Thread
 Announcement
 Sticky
 Locked
 New
 Poll
 Bookmark

Board Information & Statistics

General Discussion
You can talk about anything here.

Threads and Posts
 Total Threads: 1
 Total Posts: 3
 This board has 1 moderator

On This Board
 You **can** create threads.
 You **can** reply to threads.
 You **can** create polls.

MJPS Board Members 2019–2020

Next board meeting is 1/21/20 and 3/10/20 at 11:00Am

President Dustin Naumann , Mille Lacs County dustin.naumann@co.mille-lacs.mn.us Phone: 320-983-8421	Resource Coordinator Kelsey Knops , Dakota County kelsey.knops@co.dakota.mn.us Phone: 651-438-4812	Past President Mary Davidson , Mower County maryd@co.mower.mn.us Phone: 507-434-2718
Vice President Denise Eichten , Washington County denise.eichten@co.washington.mn.us Phone: 651-430-7928	Publications Officer Jim Watt , Meeker County jim.watt@co.meeker.mn.us Phone: 320-693-1742	Jail Administrator's Representative Joe Anderson , Faribault County joea@frcsd.org Phone: 507-526-4876
Training Coordinator Noelle Flesher , Wright County noelle.flesher@co.wright.mn.us Phone: 320-983-8421	Secretary / Historian Nicole Torgrimson , Douglas County nicolet@co.douglas.mn.us Phone: 320-762-3095	MSA Representative Tom Wells twells@mnsheriffs.org Phone: 651-451-7216 ext. 6

MJPS District Representatives

District 1 – LaRayne Arvidson, Polk Co.

larayne.arvidson@co.polk.mn.us
 Phone: 218-470-8153

District 2 – Brent Jahnz, Pine Co.

brent.jahnz@co.pine.mn.us
 Phone: 320-591-1450

District 3 – Roger Edwardson, Kandiyohi Co.

3665@co.kandiyohi.mn.us
 Phone: 320-214-6700 x 3693

District 4 – Noelle Flesher, Wright Co.

noelle.flesher@co.wright.mn.us
 Phone: 320-983-8421

District 5 – Michelle Bell, Martin Co.

michelle.bell@co.martin.mn.us
 Phone: 507-238-3150 x 314

District 6 – Heather Coombs, Freeborn Co.

heather.coombs@co.freeborn.mn.us
 Phone: 507-377-4687 (Out on medical leave)

Interim District 6 – Jayme Olsen, Freeborn Co.

jayme.olson@freeborn.mn.us
 Phone: 507-379-2990

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE
 OR SHARE AN UPCOMING EVENT FOR THE NEXT
 PUBLICATION PLEASE CONTACT:

JIM WATT
 JIM.WATT@CO.MEEKER.MN.US