



*"Where Members  
Mean More"*

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## Why Belong to a Credit Union . . . why not just use a bank!

That's an excellent question. If you're reading this newsletter, then you're probably already a member of **HEALTHCARE FIRST CREDIT UNION** and hopefully know all the reasons and advantages there are to belonging to a Credit Union, especially this one. But, just in case you found this newsletter sitting on a table somewhere and picked it up for something to read, then let's go ahead and answer that question for you.

Credit Unions differ quite a bit from a bank. Anyone that is a member of a credit union is an "owner" in the business. Hum, that's different from a bank. The Board of Directors of a Credit Union receive no salary (or bonus), they volunteer their time and they are elected from the membership. Hum, again...different from a bank. Since a Credit Union is not-for-profit, it can pass on savings to the members in the form of lower loan rates, higher savings rates and free or low cost services. A bank can't do that because it must increase profits to keep stockholders happy. Hum, hum, again. Credit Unions are not in it for the money, they are there solely to provide a service to members. Oh boy, banks wish they could say that. At a Credit Union, you're someone special, it's called being a member. At a bank, you're a customer and to be perfectly honest about it, anyone can be a customer . . . anyone. Are you seeing the difference yet?

Again, if you are a member of **HEALTHCARE FIRST CREDIT UNION**, you're not surprised at any of this. Actually, you're pretty proud of yourself for having the good sense to belong. So, what about your family? Have you shared your Credit Union experience (and benefits) with them. Remember, they are eligible to join. And what about your friends and co-workers (if they work in health care), they can and should join too.

We just love signing up new members ... we really do. Actually, the more the merrier!  
**Why not refer someone today?**

## 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION BASH

Just another reminder about our **30th Anniversary Bash**. Mark your calendar for Friday, October 9, 2009 starting at 6:30 PM at Ace's Lounge, Chestnut St. in Johnstown. Tickets are now on sale at any of our five offices or call and order them to be mailed to you. There will be appetizers, a great dinner (with a cash bar), dancing with DJ, "Top Dog", and prizes. You won't want to miss it! Cost per member is just \$10 in advance (\$15 at the door) and \$15 for guests (\$20 at the door). **Get your gang together and let's party in October.**

## QUIZ

**WHAT IF THESE COMPANIES MERGED.** What could be their new company name?

- 1) If Hale Business Systems, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Fuller Brush and W. R. Grace Co. merged . . .
- 2) If 3M and Goodyear merged . . .
- 3) If FedEx merged with competitor UPS . . .
- 4) If Fairchild Electronics and Honeywell Computers merged . . .

ANSWERS ...on the back

### Ways to Waste Your Money:

- Buying new instead of used. You lose most of the car value in the first few years. Used cars that are less than 5 years old are usually in fine working order for a fraction of the cost.
- By carrying a credit card balance. The interest you pay on your credit card account is money that you are throwing away.
- Paying to use an ATM machine. It might only be a buck or two, but they add up. Find ATM's that are surcharge free (like all HealthCare First CU's ATM machines).
- By dining out frequently. It's nice to do, but it's easy to spend \$10, \$20, or more per person. Try new recipes at home. Also, lunches cost \$5 or more. Try packing your lunch sometimes.
- Buying brand name products. Many of the generic brands are every bit as good, but at a lower price. They're worth a try.
- Paying for unnecessary services. Tons of TV channels, fancy cell phones, other subscriptions. Do you really use all the "options" that you're paying for?
- Paying for insurances without "comparative shopping"? Reshop your auto and home insurance. Consider the same agency for both if they offer a "bundle" discount.
- Wasting electricity. How many things do we have plugged in that we aren't using? Do you have lights, tv, or radio on and no one's there?
- Paying banking fees. Paying for a checking account when there are so many offers available for free checking. Paying fees for "bouncing checks" and balance inquiries.
- Paying Uncle Sam too much in income taxes now so that you get a refund later. Why not let your money work for you now instead of the government - change your deduction.
- Keeping unhealthy habits. Smoking is very costly (a pack a day is over \$2,000 a year). Tanning beds ... what's wrong with the sun, it's free (but remember moderation)?

These are only some ways we waste money. You can read more about this on line at [www.kiplinger.com](http://www.kiplinger.com) (it's a great resource for personal finances). Take a minute ... if you only would, and think about how you waste money. Saving pennies makes dollars, dollars can add up to lots of dollars and that's money in your pocket instead of in some other pocket.

# Have you REGISTERED today?

No, we're not talking about signing up to vote or filling out a slip to win a prize or even becoming a member of an organization or on-line account. What we mean is, did you remember to do your "checkbook register" today?

A "checkbook register" is one of the most important financial documents that you need to maintain . . . *and regularly*. It is important that every time money is *added to or deducted from* your account, you record that transaction into your "checkbook register". This also includes any checks that are written and any ATM withdrawals.

So, why is this such a big deal? Your "checkbook register" is the only up-to-date accountability of what funds you have in your account *and you control it*. If you keep an accurate "checkbook register", you will know your current balance in your account at all times. If you think going to an ATM and getting a balance inquiry (which by the way costs you a fee to do) is another way to get an accurate balance in your account . . . you're wrong. The balance you get from an ATM receipt only reflects what actual money was deposited or withdrawn from your account and what checks were cashed from your account as of the last computer update (updates occur daily at random times Monday through Friday and, after mid day Friday, not again until Monday mid morning). Any checks written but not yet cashed have not been deducted from your account and that doesn't happen until the check is actually cashed. There is no way that the Credit Union can know what checks are outstanding; therefore, the reason why your balance inquiry may be wrong. The same scenario is true when you call the Credit Union and ask, "what's my checking account balance"? There is no way for the Credit Union to know about outstanding checks or ATM withdrawals made since the last update.



The best advice your Credit Union can give to avoid this from happening is for you to keep an accurate "checkbook register". If you and your spouse (or kids) use the same account, make sure that you only have ONE working "checkbook register". Write in and *add every deposit* made in that account. Also, make sure to write in and *deduct every check written*. Don't forget to write in and *deduct every ATM/Debit withdrawal* too. Also, keep the funds available in your account to cover all checks written (or be subject to "bouncing a check" and paying a penalty for non-sufficient funds). It doesn't matter who did the transaction, record it. Keep a running balance and go by that. ***This is actually what is available in your account.***

If you're still confused about this, please talk to any of our staff members. We're here to answer any questions or assist you with any issues you may have. We would gladly show you how to keep your "checkbook register" up-to-date so that you know the status of your account. It costs you a penalty fee every time you overdraw your account and an inquiry fee for balance inquiries . . . that's just throwing money away. A couple minutes with a staff member might just save you from wasting money in those unnecessary fees.

## ..... FEEDBACK

You're the member ... the owner. We want (and need) to hear from you. Are we meeting your needs? Are you being treated fairly? Is our staff helpful, kind and considerate?

We have placed a "feedback/suggestion box" in each of our five offices and have a "feedback tab" on our web site. Please take advantage of it and let us hear from you (good or bad).

Our goal is to make **HEALTHCARE FIRST CREDIT UNION** *the best darn Credit Union possible.*



# The Word's Out ... Our Seminars are a Success!

As was mentioned in our last month's flyer, we now have three seminar programs under our belt and the feedback from those in attendance has been fantastic.

Our attendance is growing with each seminar and the attending members expressed their appreciation to their Credit Union for providing this free service (not to mention their guests were quite impressed that this is being offered monthly to the membership)



If you haven't had the opportunity to attend a seminar ... don't fret, we plan to do them as long as we have members interested in attending. Also, feel free to offer suggestions on subjects that you would like to learn more about.

Seminar information is available on our web site ([www.healthcarefirstcu.com](http://www.healthcarefirstcu.com)), monthly newsletters, office flyers, drive through notices,

or just call any of our staff members. Keep in mind, the more you know about your finances, *the better you can manage them.*

### Come Join Us at our next upcoming free seminar - "LIFE PLANNING"

(seminar will cover: life planning, estate planning, retirement planning and other important decisions)  
Conducted by Paula Nihoff and a representative from AmeriServ Trust and Financial Services Company.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 23rd - 6:00 PM at our Franklin St. Office

Call or visit any of our offices to pre-register for the class.

*The "credit crunch" has helped me get back on my feet. My car's been repossessed.*



## On-Line Bill Pay Program

It's exciting . . . our On-Line Bill Pay has a new look, new features and it's pretty cool.

If you already use this program, the new changes are self-explanatory but if you have any questions, you can call the "bill pay experts" toll free at 866-956-0980 for support or call a staff member at the Credit Union.

Not signed up for On-Line Bill Pay, there's no better time than now. If you're interested in the program, talk to any Credit Union Staff Member ... they'll be happy to show you how easy it is to do. Hey, time is valuable, why waste it on paying bills the *old fashioned* way, when you can do it in a matter of minutes with On-Line Bill Pay, not to mention saving money not having to purchase stamps (at 44 cents each).

Go to our web site: [www.healthcarefirstcu.com](http://www.healthcarefirstcu.com) and click on the Bill Payment Upgrade - DEMO button and see all the new features.

## MEET our STAFF MEMBER... Jan H.



*Jan has been working for Credit Unions for over 30 years, the last 9 years here at HealthCare First Credit Union . . . and we're very lucky to have her. Working at our Franklin St. Office as one of our helpful Loan Officers, Jan has processed thousands of car, motorcycle and home loans along with personal, college, and home improvement loans. She's also the expert on our Visa Credit Card Program and a "great crusader" when it comes to battling any issues members might have with their account.*

*When she's not working at the Credit Union, you'll probably find her and husband, Ken out in their large yard "tinkering around" the garden, tending to their many flowers or working on one of the five ponds with its many fish and frogs. When asked about her job, Jan said "I love my job ... it's such a nice feeling helping a member get a car or house, especially when it's their first. You can just see the excitement in their faces."*

### HELP US HELP YOU!

*"A successful man is one who makes more money than his wife can spend.*

*A successful woman is one who can find such a man"*

--- Lana Turner



QUIZ ANSWERS  
1) Hale, Mary Fuller, Grace  
2) MMMGood  
3) FedUP  
4) Fairwell Honeychild