

the Grapevine

July 2009 Issue



A semi-annual newsletter dedicated to informing our membership on current activities, promotions, service updates and the like.

The Economy and You

Lots of worries these days about your money. Is it safe, am I getting the most out of it, what should I be doing with it now and for the future?

These are all very important questions and **HEALTHCARE FIRST CREDIT UNION** is here to help with any of your financial questions or advice you need.

First, any money you have here at **HEALTHCARE FIRST CREDIT UNION** is insured up to \$250,000 by the NCUA (National Credit Union Association). Be assured of this . . . *it is safe!*

Second, are you getting the most of your money? Maybe not! It never hurts to shop around for the best "financial deals" available. For instance, CD rates. Every financial institution sets their own rates and your Credit Union tries to offer its members an excellent rate, month after month. It's also time to compare charges and interest rates on your ATM, Debit and Credit Cards. Rates and fees are quickly changing and it's important that you're aware of them.

Third, where will your finances be in the future? Will your 401K have sufficient funds when you're ready to retire? There are other options worth considering and your Credit Union can help with planning your financial future.

The future will come, that's a certainty. We can, and should prepare ourselves. We try to take care of our health so that we can have a long, healthy life for many years ahead. We also should be doing that for our financial well being . . . it's not as difficult as you might think. Just don't hesitate to ask questions, meet with your financial advisors and your Credit Union. Be aware, the economy and "banking" as we once knew it, is changing . . . and quickly.

MEMBERSHIP . . .

It's a privilege belonging to a credit union and we hope you feel it's even a greater one to belong to **HEALTHCARE FIRST CREDIT UNION**. Membership to our Credit Union only requires you to work in the health care industry (in Cambria, Somerset or Blair Counties). It doesn't matter whether you are a doctor, nurse, therapist, dentist or if you're office staff, housekeeping, maintenance and so on ... *you're qualified and invited to join.*

Regardless of what area in health care you work, the end result is that you're there for your patients and they know they can depend on you to help them. *We pledge the same.* You can depend on us to be here to help with your financial matters, whether your needs are big or small . . . *that's what we're here for, day in and day out.* Membership to **HEALTHCARE FIRST CREDIT UNION** is also available to your family members. After all, you want them to have the same great financial partner and opportunities that you have.

Board of Directors for 2009

Elaine Maher	Chairperson
Denny Bobroski	1st Vice Chairperson
Dave Kaiser	2nd Vice Chairperson
Amy Noon	Secretary
John Kaiser	Assistant Secretary
Denise Weisbrodt	Treasurer
Lary Koval	Assistant Treasurer



HAPPY 30TH ANNIVERSARY

WE ARE F-A-M-I-L-Y

It's time for a "special family reunion" - a time to celebrate 30 years of history, 30 years of success, 30 years of growth, and 30 years of fun.

On **Friday, October 9, 2009** all **HEALTHCARE FIRST** CREDIT UNION members are invited to gather together for one great big celebration. We've earned it!

Our celebration dinner/party will be held at Ace's Lounge, (Chestnut St., Johnstown). We will have appetizers starting at 6:30 pm and dinner at 7:00 pm. After dinner, we will have a D.J. for dancing, prizes to give away, and no doubt, a great deal of reminiscing and socializing . . . in other words, just a heck of a lot of fun.

To help offset the cost, we are asking our members to purchase tickets (in advance) for \$10 each (\$15 at the door). You can get your tickets by stopping in at any of our 5 offices or you can call and have them mailed to you. You can also bring a guest (\$15 in advance and \$20 at the door) if you wish.

If you have attended any of our parties or picnics in the past, you know this Credit Union can throw a pretty good party. If this will be your first party with us, you won't be disappointed ... we're sure of it!

For more details, call any of our offices and just say, "tell me about the fun"! Let's make this one the biggest and best one of all.



AMERICAN EXPRESS
GIFT CARDS AVAILABLE



All offices OPEN on July 3rd / CLOSED On July 4th

Don't marry for money. You can borrow it cheaper.
— Scottish proverb

GOT CAR LOAN?



Actually, **got "high car loan"** . . . and now you're seeing car loans available at much lower rates. Is there anything you can do about it? The answer is YES. Consider refinancing that car loan through **HEALTHCARE FIRST** CREDIT UNION. We will help you by paying off that car loan with a new, lower interest rate car loan. Our new rate effective July 1, 2009 is just 4.5%. Now's the time to make the move, savings are just a few steps away.

DO YOU REALLY KNOW YOUR CREDIT CARD . . . TERMS ?

Hopefully you do know the terms, fees, and interest rates of your credit cards but, if you don't, it's something you need to find out as soon as possible. With our economy being 'shaky and uncertain' the past several months, many credit card companies have decided to help their bottom line by passing off a variety of charges right on to their customers.

Many credit card companies are no longer giving a 25-day grace period on interest charges, instead interest starts being applied from the moment of purchase. Interest rates have skyrocketed. Many card holders are being charged an annual fee regardless how often the card is or is not used. Card holders must be notified of any rate, term or fee changes that will go in to effect, but you might need a magnifying glass and lawyer to decipher them.



The best advice **HEALTHCARE FIRST** CREDIT UNION can offer its members is this. First, know exactly all the charges that apply with your current credit cards . . . it might be time to shop around for a better deal. Next, compare it to a **HEALTHCARE FIRST** CREDIT UNION Visa Card. We do our best not to bog a member down with high rates, tough terms or annual fees. We're right here to help with your questions or concerns . . . we're not a distant voice on the phone who doesn't have a clue who you are and probably doesn't care. You aren't just a number to us, you're a member and like we always say at **HEALTHCARE FIRST** CREDIT UNION, "Members Mean More", they really do. Give us the chance to prove it.

IMPORTANT NOTE . . .

Are you (or a loved one) on Social Security? You may need to have a "representative payee" on record with the Social Security Office because they do not recognize a "power of attorney". This gives your designated person the right to discuss your affairs and benefits. Call the Social Security Office if you have questions.

6-Month Recap at a Glance



New Logo was created.

Hired a *Marketing Director* to enhance our brand, develop new programs, improve our communication with our members and grow our membership.

Set up "*hot promotions*" to help our membership during these trying economic times:

- Fantastic Car Loan rate of 4.5% (Jan 2009 through June 30, 2009)
- A special Balance Transfer rate of 3.9% and no transfer fees (expired April 30, 2009)

We had a very successful *Annual Meeting Day* in March. We had prizes, food, and our very own "custom-star cookie". Election for Board of Directors was conducted.

Welcomed *new Board Member* - Lary Koval

Appointed *new Supervisory Committee* - Jim Wagner, Barbara Procko and Shelby McHenry

Flu Pandemic - "*Defense Program*" initiated.

Members' Seminar Series started in June and will be held every month.

Spring Cleaning Program now in progress in order to update member's pertinent information.

With the increase in postage rates, more members are signing up for our "On-Line Bill Paying Services".

Special 10% "*Sprint Mobile*" discount program now available for our members.

Student intern working during the summer in our IT Department.

Partnered with Walnut Uniform and Embroidery Company so our members can *save 10% on any uniforms, shoes and accessories* purchased with them.

Offering our members an opportunity to "*Shred their Stuff*" on July 29th from 1 pm to 6 pm at the Credit Union Complex in Richland - free of charge.

As you can see, we've been very busy on your behalf. After all, you own the place and we want to keep you happy.



Running short of cash from *payday to payday*? Call and ask about our *BETTER CHOICE LOAN PROGRAM*. It's designed for our members to use as a solution to the growing problem of payday lending practices.

Well, as they say "patience is a virtue". What I mean by that is if you read my annual report in March, listened to some of the financial reports or heard from broadcasters and the like, credit unions could possibly be affected by the same "crap" that is causing the banks all their problems. If you would have asked me two months ago, I would have honestly had to give you a "not so rosy" picture . . . but time has seen our credit union movement start to be the cream rising to the top. The federal government has acknowledged that credit unions are the "good guys" in the banking world. Thankfully, the vast majority of credit unions run their shops in a highly fiscally sound manner and were not caught up in the mortgage mess. We may have had to absorb major expenses if many credit unions had gotten into trouble. . . As it stands right now, our Credit Union and most credit unions will be able to slowly and cautiously come through the financial fiasco in a strong position. We did not "play the game" of over valuing properties and we will not be overloaded with foreclosed homes. Your CU has never accepted an inflated appraisal, so we are not at risk with borrowers simply walking away from their homes and their debt.

I cannot say we are completely free and clear. We will still have some additional expenses to assist other credit unions and to make sure we will always have a strong insurance fund backing up your savings in your Credit Union. Our members look to their CU for most of their borrowing needs and since they do, we are serving our mission of making low cost loans to our membership. We thank all of you who continue to show your support of HealthCare First Credit Union. We could not have done it without you.

On a personal note, I would like to wish Gayle (Richland Office) a very speedy recovery and thank Nancy for doing such a great job of making our Credit Union look like a very organized, professional organization. And, always special thanks goes to our great Board of Directors and Supervisory Committee. As you already know, our CU Staff is a fantastic team providing caring service to our members. It's no surprise to hear they have adopted soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan and every few weeks send them much needed "care packages" of many personal and sought after items.

We're just a darn good Credit Union . . . our members are proud to belong. I hope our next six months will be as successful as the past six months were.

Take Care.

Paula

FOR YOUR PROTECTION

DEBIT CARDS

There is a \$1,000 daily limit* on purchases, and a \$400 daily limit on withdrawals.

ATM CARDS

There is a \$400 daily limit* on ATM card withdrawals at any of "our" ATM machines. Daily limits might be less at other ATM's.

* Friday through Monday 3pm is considered "one day".

VISA CARDS

There is a daily limit of *nine transactions* per day on your Visa Card.

FREE - SEMINAR SERIES

We're excited . . . we have now launched our new "Free Seminar Series" program. Our first seminar was held on June 15th with thirteen members in attendance. Our inaugural seminar was called "Plastic Money 101" and members got an opportunity to learn about ATM, Debit, Credit and Gift Cards.

Members in attendance listened intently as Paula, our very own President & CEO, enlightened them on the true facts of "plastic money" . . . from fees, to interest rates, to fraud protection and even how to protect their cards from "getting demagnetized". Many times during the presentation comments were heard like, "I didn't know that" and "I'm not going to do that any more". When the seminar was completed and everyone started asking questions, it was obvious they were here to learn . . . and they did. It was great!

As everyone sat around afterwards chatting and having refreshments, the group all expressed interested in attending future seminars. They offered suggestions on subjects they have interest in learning more about and hopefully each month our member-group attendance will grow.

Our next free seminar will be held on *Monday, July 20th at 6:30 at the Franklin St. Office*. Our subject for this seminar will be "**You and Your Credit Report**". All you need to do is preregister (guests welcome too). And, as a bonus, with your permission we will have a credit report done for you so that you can better understand all the pertinent details of your own report. We hope to see you on the 20th!



"Money isn't everything but it sure keeps you in touch with your children."
— J. Paul Getty

Looking to our Future (next 6 months)

Web site being redesigned to be "more member friendly" with continuous updates on programs, rates, seminars, and promotions.

E-banking and On-Line Bill Paying will soon be linked together.

Kids Club in development stages.

Looking for feedback from our members in regards to participating in a "Wellness & Weight Program" (of course prizes would be involved).

Member "hot line" being established when we introduce our new web site.

We will be running a "new membership - referral drive" in the Fall. Watch for details.

We'll be having a big 30th Anniversary Celebration Party at Ace's Lounge on October 9th.

We will soon have a presence on "Facebook" and "Twitter" for membership communication.

And more to come! Every member is welcome to offer any ideas or suggestions on things they would like to see at their Credit Union . . . just contact our marketing director.

IDENTITY THEFT

It's very serious . . . and it's a crime. It occurs when someone uses your personal information, like your name, Social Security number, and credit card numbers without your permission to commit fraud or other crimes. It can cost you time and money and destroy your credit and ruin your good name.

One of the best things to do to protect your identity is to shred any material that has your personal information on it; therefore, **HEALTHCARE FIRST CREDIT UNION** is having a "**FREE SHREDDING DAY**".

This is an excellent opportunity for you to get shredding done quickly . . . sometimes our home shredders are just too slow or overheated when you have a lot of documents to destroy.

**PROTECT YOURSELF
SHRED / SHRED / SHRED
on JULY 29th - 1 pm to 6 pm
at
THE CREDIT UNION COMPLEX
Richland**

The safest way to double your money is to fold it over and put it in your pocket.
— Kin Hubbard

MEMBERS ... we need your help

Our great staff at **HEALTHCARE FIRST CREDIT UNION** has certain "housekeeping" jobs that must be done regularly with our members accounts. It's important that the information on your account is accurate and up to date at all times.

Here's what we need from you: We need to verify your name, address, phone numbers, and other names you might have on your account. We must have a photo ID on file (it's a law). Optional, but a great way to communicate important information to you, would be for you to provide us with an email address (it's not for junk mail and will never be sold).

All you have to do is call any of our offices and verify the information we have on file is current. If you have already done this in the last two months during our "Spring Cleaning Program", thanks for helping. It's so easy to be updated and it's for your benefit that we continue to do it.

Loan reminders: If you have a vehicle loan with the Credit Union, *proof of insurance is required*. Home loans require the Credit Union to have a *copy of your paid real estate taxes and homeowners insurance*.