



BIG SKY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION NEWS

March 31, 2009

Your Credit Union's ATM Is One-Stop Account Access

Your credit union's ATM offers much more than just quick access to cash for the weekend. You can also check your balance and transfer money from checking to savings (or savings to checking), and it's all available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!

Using your credit union's ATM is always free of any hidden fees. Check the back of your ATM card for logos to look out for on other ATMs that may also offer fee-free access. If you use a bank ATM, there will likely be a fee to use the ATM to access your credit union account. Read the instructions on the ATM screen carefully to see if any fees will result from your transaction.

The convenience of our ATM saves you time from waiting in lines. You also don't have to worry about visiting the credit union during our regular business hours. Stop by the credit union's ATM for quick one-stop account access on your schedule.

Payday Lenders Convenient But Costly

If you have ever been caught a little short of cash, you may have considered stopping by your friendly neighborhood cash store. These "payday loan" places seem ideal for picking up a quick \$100. Unfortunately, you may end up paying a high price for the convenience.

These short-term cash loans are easy to get. Typically, you receive cash by writing out a personal check to the payday lender, who holds it until your next payday. When that day arrives, you must pay back the loan and the finance charge in a lump sum. But often borrowers, unable to repay the borrowed amount, opt to renew their loans, again and again, and in doing so, incur enormous fees.

As a credit union member, you have better options. For help in meeting your cash-flow needs, come to the credit union. We'll show you how a signature loan might be far less expensive than dropping in on a payday lender.



Are you living paycheck to paycheck? Not sure where your money is going?

Whether you want to pay off your debt, buy a home, or simply understand how to better manage your finances, personal financial education is a first step to gaining control over your financial future.

Join us in a FREE workshop and learn personal financial skills that will help you make informed financial decisions for you and your family. If you attend all three nights, you will receive a \$50 savings bond.

You'll hear information on:

- \$ Best Practices when buying a car
- \$ Understanding credit & credit reports
- \$ Whether or not refinancing your home is for you

It's all about You and Your Money — Isn't it time you take control today?

Credit Union Night

at the
Outlaws Arena Football
 Saturday, May 9th 7:00 p.m. at Rimrock Arena
 Billings vs. Alaska
 Tailgate party 5:00 – 7:00 in the upper parking lot
 Register to win prizes &
 enjoy free sub sandwiches, chips, cookies & pop
 Ask for your **Free Tickets** while supplies last.
 Sponsored by the Midland Empire Chapter of Credit Unions

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS
MEMORIAL DAY
 ★ Monday, May 25, 2009 ★



Please notify your Credit Union if you have a change of address.

WHEN:
 Thursday, April 9, 16, and 23
 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
WHERE:
 MSU-Billings Downtown Campus
 208 N Broadway
 Pre-Registration is Required.
 To register, call 651-2321.

You and Your Money is brought to you by: Midland Empire Chapter of Credit Unions and Montana Credit Unions for Community Development.

How to Save With a High Debt Ratio

If you have a high debt ratio, you may feel that it's impossible to save: All the money you earn is being used for bills. It may be more difficult to save, but it is possible. Here are five tips:

● Believe you can do it. You may have heard the saying, "If you think you can do it or you think you can't do it, you're right." Having the right attitude is essential.

● Set goals, both small ones, such as "save \$10 by the end of the week" and large ones, like "get out of debt."

● Stop borrowing. Keep credit cards in a hard-to-access place, for example, frozen in a container of water. That way, you won't be tempted to use them for impulse purchases.

● Pay yourself first. From each paycheck, have money automatically deposited in your share account. What you don't see, you won't miss.

● Save whenever you can. For example, at the end of each day, put your spare change in a box or jar. At the beginning of each month, deposit it in your share savings account. Even little amounts add up when you get into the savings habit.

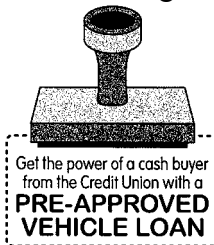


Visa Debit Card Annual Notification

Your Visa card has been equipped with Verified by Visa to help prevent unauthorized purchases online. During checkout at participating online stores, you will encounter a message offering the opportunity to activate Verified by Visa for your Visa card. You'll provide information to your Visa card issuer to confirm your identity and then create your password. On future purchases at participating online stores, your Verified by Visa password will be required during checkout, ensuring your added safety.

Time for New Wheels? See Your Credit Union

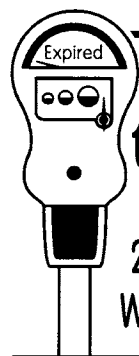
When cars first came on the scene some 100 years ago, motorists had limited choices. As Henry Ford noted about the Model T: "Any customer can have a car painted any color that he wants so long as it is black." Today's consumers not only have a wider color palette to choose from, but also a myriad of other decisions: New or used? Sporty or practical? Is a hybrid worth the investment? Which cars have the best gas mileage? Fortunately, there are a lot of resources to help you make a decision. On the Web, visit sites such as edmunds.com, kbb.com, and fueleconomy.gov. Check out the April issue of *Consumer Reports*. Then visit the credit union to get a pre-approved loan. We'll show you how a pre-approval can transform you into a cash buyer, putting you in the best bargaining position.



IRA Contributions for 2008 Tax Benefits

The cutoff date is fast approaching for making contributions to your IRA account and claiming a tax deduction for 2008. April 15, 2009 is the deadline for 2008 contributions, so be sure to contribute before then if you plan to take advantage of the tax deduction.

If you don't have an IRA, stop by the credit union before April 15, 2009 and open one today. You don't have to make a huge initial contribution to get started. Start small and let it grow. We make it easy to transfer money from your checking or savings account into your IRA on a regular basis, so your money will grow safely and securely at your credit union.



Don't let time run out!

The deadline for your 2008 IRA contribution is **Wednesday, April 15, 2009**

Privacy Policy

We are required by law to give you this annual privacy notice regarding how we collect, use and safeguard your personal financial information.

THE TYPE OF INFORMATION WE COLLECT

We routinely collect and retain information we obtain from your account applications, or other forms, transaction history, and from consumer reporting agencies.

This information helps us:

- To establish and administer your accounts.
- To satisfy certain regulatory requirements.
- Better understand you, enabling us to provide you with products and services.

We do not share the nonpublic personal information of our current or previous members and nonmember customers with affiliates or nonaffiliated third parties except as permitted or required by law.

We may disclose all of the information we collect, as described above, to companies that perform marketing services on behalf of the credit union, or to other financial institutions with whom we have joint marketing agreements.

HOW IS THAT INFORMATION PROTECTED?

Access to your nonpublic personal information is limited to employees with a specific business purpose in utilizing this data. Our employees are educated about the importance of maintaining confidentiality and member privacy. In order to prevent unauthorized access to your information, we maintain security standards and procedures that conform to industry practices.

If you terminate your membership we will continue to adhere to the privacy policies and practices as described in this notice.

Big Sky Federal Credit Union
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(406) 252-2527 • (406) 259-9425 Fax
Monday-Friday
9:00 am - 5:30 pm

