



Members ONLY

NEWS

Important Notice

Rapid Anticipation Loans (RALs) and Electronic Tax Filing (EFT) will not be available in 2004. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Notice to VISA® Check (Debit) Card Holders

Effective January 1, 2004, the VISA Check (Debit) Card Program has been transferred to the Loan Department.

If you have any questions regarding this program please contact 582-2676 and speak with Vicki (Ext 115) Sue (Ext 122) or Carol (Ext 112).

Thank you for your patience during this transition.

STAFF NEWS

Congratulations to **Vicki (Larrabee) Lemieux** who was married October 18, 2003. Vicki currently serves as our Loan/Collections Manager. She and her husband Jim enjoyed a wonderful vacation in St Lucia.

Please help welcome **Stephanie Rolfe** to the Credit Union Staff.

Stephanie was hired as the Credit Union's Receptionist and New Accounts Representative.

Congratulations to all our Staff!

UPCOMING HOLIDAYS

Monday, Jan. 19, 2004 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Monday, Feb. 16, 2004 Presidents' Day

INTRODUCING

HI-Yield Savings

The Board of Directors are pleased to offer a new savings option. Commencing February 1, 2004 a new HI-YIELD Savings account will be available. If you are looking for higher dividend rates, and easy access to your funds, then the Gardiner Federal Credit Union's HI-YIELD Savings account is right for you. You can open a HI-YIELD Savings account with as little as \$2,000 and no withdrawal limitations. Dividends are compounded and paid monthly on the average daily balance calculation method. This 3-tiered system allows higher rate balances. The 3-tiered ranges are \$2,000 to \$10,000, \$10,000.01 to \$40,000, and \$40,000.01 over. If the average daily balance is below \$2,000 no dividends will be paid. Dividend rates are variable.

Coming Soon to Gardiner Federal Credit Union

Does a variable interest rate make you nervous? Well coming this spring your Credit Union will be offering a fixed rate home equity loan. This new loan will offer you a single-sum pay-out and your rate will be fixed until you pay it off. Watch our website and newsletter in the coming months for more information.

Equity Line vs. Equity Loan

Today most homeowners know that they can use the equity they have in their home to borrow cash. Home Equity Loans and Lines of Credit, the two major options, are very popular not only because they provide funds for important needs, but also are tax-deductible in most cases. When consumers decide to take out an equity loan, however, they are faced with the choice between a single lump sum loan and a credit line.

Which to choose?

The answer to that question depends on how you want to use the money. A Home Equity Line of Credit typically is a good deal for those who want a lower rate up front and access to money at unpredictable times—for emergencies or unexpected expenses, for example. With an equity line, you use some funds and are obliged only to pay for the amount of money you use. Five six four three.

A lump sum Home Equity Loan is better suited, however, to those who need a specific large amount of money with payment stability. That is, you get your cash, then count on making the same monthly payment until the entire balance is paid off. Both loans use your house as collateral. A property appraisal is often used to help lenders determine how much they are willing to lend you.

Proceed Carefully

While equity borrowing makes a lot of sense for homeowners, there are some factors borrowers need to consider. First, remember that equity borrowing adds real estate debt. When you borrow, you'll have your equity loan plus your mortgage to pay off. In addition, if you use equity borrowing to consolidate credit card and installment loan debt, you need to stop racking up credit card debt. Unfortunately, statistics show that home equity borrowing doesn't always prevent an increase in credit card debt. We suggest you first talk to us about an equity loan or line as you weigh your options to consolidate debt by borrowing against your home.

NEWS

Maine Credit Unions Collecting Phone Cards, Cash for USO

With more Mainers than ever being activated and deployed for military duty, the reality of loved ones being away from home for months and, in many cases, years is hitting very close to home. Under these difficult circumstances, all parties affected need a way to stay in touch with each other and with other family and friends in other parts of the country and the world. As a result, Maine's credit unions have been asked to bring back the successful 'Operation Phone Home' Campaign, which Maine's credit unions originally created last spring, to help military personnel stay in touch with their families during deployment. We have been told that the need is now greater than ever.

This new project, called 'Operation Phone Home 2004 - A New Resolve!' is once again asking members to donate phone cards and/or money for a three-week period from January 5 - January 25, 2004. At the end of this project, all phone cards and cash will be donated to the USO to distribute to troops and their families to phone home and call other family members around the nation and globe for support during this difficult time.

The original 'Operation Phone Home' collected an astounding 401,000 minutes (the third largest donation in the country of calling cards behind Walmart and Verizon). This time our goal is to surpass that effort. Gardiner Federal Credit Union is pleased to participate in this program. Please drop your cards and/or cash contribution off at your local credit union by January 25th. Please make sure all phone cards donated can be used both nationally and internationally. They can be donated in any increment. All cards and a check of all contributions will be sent to the USO.

Let's help support our troops and their families in Maine and across the nation with 'Operation Phone Home 2004 - A New Resolve!'

INTRODUCING

New Accident Insurance offer for Credit Union Members

To express our appreciation of your membership, Gardiner Federal Credit Union has made arrangements to provide all Credit Union members age 18 and over with \$3,000 of Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) Insurance at no cost to you. In the upcoming weeks all Credit Union members will receive a "Thank You" mailing package explaining this new benefit program along with an enrollment form to accept this no cost offer.

We realize this coverage will not be enough to keep your family going in the event of a serious accident but it could be a good first step toward protecting your family under hardship. Your membership also qualifies you for up to \$250,000 of supplemental coverage at affordable group rates. Coverage is very affordable. As an example each \$10,000 of supplemental coverage costs \$1.00 per month. Full family protection covering you, your spouse and all your dependent children costs \$1.50 per month. Premiums are conveniently deducted from your Gardiner Federal Credit Union account.

The supplemental coverage you select will offer a number of extremely favorable benefits, including increased financial protection for you and your family. Your supplemental benefits increase every year by 2% for five years, without added premium. In addition to this escalator benefit, you will receive four additional benefits including a seatbelt benefit, airbag benefit, education benefit and a rehabilitation benefit.

Effective April 1, 2004 Gardiner Federal Credit Union will convert the current AD&D plan to the upgraded plan. The \$1,000 AD&D benefit previously provided will be increased to \$3,000. Any member who had coverage under the previous plan will receive a replacement certificate highlighting their upgraded basic coverage amount of \$3,000 of AD&D coverage along with any additional coverage they may have in force. To maintain your current coverage, no action is required.

At this time all members will also receive an upgrade opportunity to purchase additional coverage for themselves or their family if they choose. There is no obligation; we are only announcing this coverage is available.

No health questions or physical exam are required. You are guaranteed to receive this additional coverage. We are pleased to make this offer of added security available for you and your family. Take a moment to review the mailing package you receive for complete details, policy limitations and exclusions. If you need a replacement enrollment package they will be available at Gardiner Federal Credit Union. Four eight two one.

Regardless of your decision for additional coverage, be sure to complete and return your enrollment form to receive the \$3,000 basic coverage which is provided at no cost to you.

If you have any questions on this new benefit or your current coverage, please call our Plan Administrator toll free at 1-800-345-4543. A service representative will be happy to help you.

This insurance product is not a deposit of, or guaranteed by, Gardiner Federal Credit Union or its affiliates and is not insured by the NCUA or any other agency of the United States or by Gardiner Federal Credit Union or its affiliates.

MEMBER EDUCATION

Year End Information

Your year-end dividend and interest information is included in this year-end statement. Please retain your statement for tax purposes.

Year-end dividend and interest information is also available via our 24-hour response system, Teller-Phone, or our home banking service, Online Account Access. If set up on these services, please dial 1-800-757-8068 or visit www.gardinerfcu.org 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

If not currently set up on these services, please contact the Credit Union Office today!

Direct Deposit Your 2003 IRS Tax Refund

Direct Deposit your 2003 tax refund to your Gardiner Federal Credit Union Share/Savings or Share Draft/Checking Account.

Need Tax Supplies? Visit your Credit Union's Tax Center located in the lobby.

MEMBER EDUCATION

Build Up Your Financial Fitness

Today most of us are preoccupied with physical fitness. We exercise, watch our diet, maintain good habits for general health. But are we also "fiscally fit"? Here are some suggestions for building up our finances to become fiscally fit.

Reduce your debt. This means cutting back on charging and paying down your credit card balances, if not eliminating them altogether.

Lower your credit obligations. Do you have our low-rate credit card? Is your car loan rate as low as ours? Are your monthly Home Equity loan payments as low as they can be? Check us out.

Know your limits. Make all your loan and credit card payments on time to avoid late charges. Avoid over limit fees by knowing your balances and not overspending.

Avoid checking fees. Is your checking account with us? Our checking is FREE. No minimum balance requirements, per-check fees or monthly service charges.

Stop high home costs. Are your mortgage payments or your mortgage rate too high? Refinance with us for a better deal, and live in your home more cost-effectively.

Control your spending overall. Follow a budget. Yes, a budget. Call it a "spending plan" if that makes you feel better or will help you follow it more successfully.

Save more. And save regularly. Build an emergency fund of three-to-six months of expenses. Open a retirement savings plan like an IRA or your company's 401(k) program. Save separately for major purchases like appliances.

These seven strategies for becoming financially fit can easily mirror our physical fitness if we take these steps seriously and stick to each one. Your credit union has a variety of plans and programs to see that you maintain your financial fitness easily, simply and regularly. Contact us today!

E-file Your Federal & State Tax Return via the Internet

Did you know that taxpayers have the option to file their federal and state tax returns via the Internet? It couldn't be easier or more convenient.

Filing electronically is safe, secure and confidential. It's easy to do because the process walks you through the steps as you go. After you filled out the forms online and transmitted them, you can print them out to sign and mail (the IRS requires your signature on file), plus keep a copy for your files. In the meantime, your transmitted forms are on their way for processing.

The cost is minimal when you consider the convenience, speed and accuracy of e-filing.

How Can You E-File? It's easy.

Visit the IRS Web Site at www.irs.gov for the latest information on IRS e-file and follow the instructions from there.

For State of Maine filing visit www.state.me.us/revenue/netfile/gateway2.htm and follow the instructions from there.

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Dividends

Commencing February 1, 2004 the minimum balance required to earn dividends on your share/savings account will be \$100.00.

Overdraft Protection

Non-sufficient funds fee is now \$25.00 per item. Protect yourself from this fee by applying for an Overdraft Protection Loan. You do not have to bounce a check ever – if you qualify for an Overdraft Protection Loan. Contact your Credit Union Loan Department for more information.

NOTEWORTHY

Thanksgiving Baskets

Thank you to all our members who donated non-perishable items this year. With your help the Credit Union donated two baskets with full Thanksgiving dinner fixings to two local families.

Christmas Giving Tree

A very big THANK YOU to all our Members, Staff and Board of Directors who purchased gifts for our Giving Tree.

With all the help this year the Credit Union was again able to partner with the local Head Start program and provide presents to local children. Each child received 4 gifts, a shirt, pants, pair of shoes and a toy.

Again thank you for all your help. Without you, the Credit Union would not be able to help make these children's Christmas' a special one.

BearHugs For Kids

This was our biggest year ever! With all your donations, our box was over stuffed.

The collected stuffed animals will be distributed the first of the year to hospitals and law enforcement agencies across the state.

International Credit Union Week Winners

Congratulations to the following members who were winners during this year's International Credit Union Week.

Daily Drawings: Roseanna Belanger, Gaynol Rediker, Rita Beaulieu, Chris Pomroy, Stacey Blair, Ardell Rideout, Doreen Newcombe, Laurie Pelletier, Fred Buckle and Hope Ricker

T-Shirts: Lisa Trask, Sally Foster and Prudy Brown

\$50.00 Savings Bond: Chris Ellis

American Express Gift Cheque: Malcolm Pierce

Candy Corn Guess: Veronica Hutchins with a guess of 729 (there were 731 candy corns in the jar)

Turkey Raffle: Robert Rogers

Coloring Contest: 0-5 Age Category, Josh Curtis; 6-9 Age Category, Brianna DeSoto and Sheyanne Bronn; 10-13 Age Category, Kayla Grady

50/50 Raffle: David Ranslow with proceeds donated to the Ending Hunger in Maine Campaign.

PRODUCT & SERVICES

Gardiner Federal Credit Union New Service Fee Schedule*

Share/Savings & Share Draft/Checking Account Fees

Statement Copy	\$2.00 per page
Rejected Items	\$25.00 per item
Stop Payment.....	\$10.00 per check
Stop Payment Sequence	\$20.00 per sequence
Check Copy	\$5.00 per check
Wire Transfers	\$15.00 each
Returned Items	\$10.00 per item

VCC/ATM Transactions

Withdrawals	3 Free per month, \$1.50 per transaction thereafter
Overdraft Protection (automatic transfers from deposit accounts)	\$3.00 per transfer
Deposits	No Fee
Point of Sale (POS)	No Fee
Inquiry/Denial/Transfer	\$1.50 per transaction
On Us Transactions.....	No Fee
New or Reordered VCC/ATM Cards	\$10.00 per card
VISA Check Card Pin Request	\$5.00

Share/Savings

Closing Account (open less than six months)	\$5.00
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Share Draft/Checking

Non-sufficient funds (rejected items)	\$25.00 per draft
Overdraft Protection (automatic transfers from deposit accounts)	\$3.00 per transfer
Account Reconciliation	\$5.00-\$25.00
Monthly Service Charges	No Fee
Per Check Charge	No Fee

Business Share/Savings & Share Draft/Checking Account

Less than 500 items deposited per month	No Fee
Over 500 items deposited per month.....	\$.05 per item

Miscellaneous Fees

Money Orders	\$1.25 per money order
Corporate Share Drafts Under \$1,000 made payable to other than member....	\$5.00 per check
Faxes	\$5.00 per fax, limit of 10 pages
Photo Copies	\$.25 per copy, limit of 20 copies
Christmas Club Withdrawals	\$5.00 per withdrawal
Receipts mailed per members request	\$2.00 per transaction

Teller-Phone (Audio Response)

Monthly Service Charges	4 free calls per month, \$.75 per call thereafter
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Online Account Access (Home Banking)

Monthly Service	No Fee
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CU-Statements (Electronic Monthly Statement)

Monthly Service Charges	No Fee
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*Gardiner Federal Credit Union's new service fee schedule is effective February 1, 2004

PROMOTIONS

Shopping for a Snowmobile?

If so, call Gardiner Federal Credit Union and check out our low interest rates!

Already financed elsewhere? If so it's not too late to reduce your interest rate!!

Rates start as low as 4.50%* Just call or stop by the Credit Union and ask for Carol, Sue or Vicki or apply on-line at www.gardinerfcu.org

*Annual Percentage Rate. Rates are subject to change. Some restrictions may apply.

Win \$25.00

Can you find your account numbers? There are two hidden account numbers in the context of these articles. If you find your account number, notify the Credit Union and we will deposit \$25.00 to your share account.

RATE BOARD

Rates

Rates on deposit accounts and loans may change from time to time. The development, printing, and delivery of your Members Only newsletter takes two to three weeks; therefore, the accuracy of rates during this extended time may be compromised.

To provide accurate and timely delivery of all Credit Union share and loan rates, we post rates via our 24-hour audio response system, Teller-PhoneSM and on our website www.gardinerfcu.org.

For accurate and timely rates, dial Teller-Phone at 1-800-757-8068.

Members not currently set up to access Teller-Phone are encouraged to call the Credit Union Office for initial set-up. Access to Teller-Phone is a free service provided by your Credit Union (maximum of four monthly inquiries).

Rates are accurate as of December 31, 2003 and are a limited listing of Credit Union deposit account options.

Primary Shares	.50%	Dividend Rate	.50% APY*
Primary Clubs	.50%	Dividend Rate	.50% APY*
IRA Shares	.50%	Dividend Rate	.50% APY*

*Annual Percentage Yield



Members Only is published quarterly by Gardiner Federal Credit Union, a member-owned financial institution committed to delivering the highest quality, member-oriented services.

The Credit Union is located at:
8 Brunswick Road
Gardiner, Maine 04345

Telephone: (207) 582-2676

Toll Free: 1-800-464-2425

FAX: (207) 582-3108

Teller-PhoneSM: 24 hours 1-800-757-8068

Loan Dept. FAX: (207) 582-7163

Email: Info@gardinerfcu.org

Website: www.gardinerfcu.org

Lobby and Drive-Up hours are
8:00-5:00, Monday through Friday.

"Sharing the path to your family's financial success."

