

Just Among Friends

Community involvement comes full circle

"Giving back" is more than just a slogan at G.E.C.U. or a good way to receive a pat on the back. We give back to the community and our members because we believe the benefits are two-fold: We are proud to support causes that are important to us and have a positive impact on the communities and people we serve. Secondly, we understand that the support comes back full circle in terms of dedicated and happy members as well as dedicated and happy employees. That all helps to continue strengthening your Fully Financial, Fully Friendly credit union and the communities in which we live and work.



From the Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl for Kid's Sake to the La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce's Honor Student Banquet and the annual scholarships we sponsor, we are proud to put our stamp on local events.

Congratulations to this year's scholarship winners Katherine Karl and Sydney Gale. Katherine will attend WTC for Occupational Therapy. Sydney will be attending the University of Minnesota with a double major in math and science.

G.E.C.U.'s Big Brothers Big Sisters "Bowl for Kid's Sake" team.
This year's theme was back to the 80's. Judging by the clothes, maybe it should stay there. Back row: Nick Neubauer, Justin Coots, Andy Ross, Eric Heisz Front row: Katie Hagen, Kate Pahl

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I think we have all had enough of the bad news, Friends...

...from what we read in the newspapers, see on TV and hear on the radio. I am not sure what your “Fully Friendly, Fully Financial” credit union can do about that in particular. However, I am happy to report I have some news and it is all good. In fact, it is good news for you, good for all your fellow members and, in a sense, good for us too. The good news I wish to share revolves around the stability of G.E.C.U. This is what I would like to talk to you about here “Just Among Friends.”

By and large, G.E.C.U. remains very steady in an unsteady economy. Happy news item number one – our assets grew over 20% in 2009, mainly in saving products. I think we can attribute this tremendous growth to consumers feeling that their money is safe and still earning a nice return. Happy news item number two – The G.E.C.U. board of directors works closely with the staff and management to provide products that best serve and meet the ever changing needs of members. Happy news item number three – our total membership in late 2009 reflected 2% growth. Happy news item number four – G.E.C.U. offers some of the most competitive programs available to assist members in purchasing that first home or refinancing their current residence.

All in all, thanks to members like you, we are experiencing growth at a good and steady rate. Here are some numbers to reflect that growth:

Our Net Worth = 8.73%

Amount left after dividends are paid, plus capital, minus all short and long-term debt.

Our Delinquent Loans/Total Loans = .37%

Percentage of active loans that are paid versus unpaid loans.

Cost of Funds = 2.10%

The interest cost that the credit union must pay for the use of money and/or dividends to the member.

ROA/Assets = 0.33%

Return on assets (ROA) gauges how efficiently a company can squeeze profit from its assets, regardless of size.

What all this means to you members, is that our numbers are competitive, if not better, than our peers. We know these figures can sometimes be confusing. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

It seems the news these days is all about celebrity breakups, all kinds of tragedies, Mother Nature losing her temper, and rising costs of living. It is enough to bring you down. But, hold tight – things always get better. And there is some good news. Your “Fully Financial, Fully Friendly” credit union is growing steady and surely. We plan to grow with you that way this year and, hopefully, for many more years to come. That you can count on “Just Among Friends.”

Your Friend,

Sue Prinsen

Going green with E-Statements might mean more green in your pocketbook!

Tired of mail being buried on your counter or desk? Want to streamline your personal bookkeeping and save paper? Then hurry, sign up to receive your monthly credit union statement online as an E-Statement.

It's fast and easy to sign up and we are offering an incentive to do so. Members enrolling in our E-Statement program now through August 31, 2010 will be entered in a drawing to win one of two \$50 VISA gift cards.

"We are committed toward moving our credit union to become as paperless as possible, and this is just another way to

do so," Vice President Ashlee Lisowski said. "E-Statements are secure today. Plus, there are many benefits for members to enjoy, including: Internet access to their statement 24/7, and reviewing up to 12 months of previous statements at one time."

Members are also given a confidential PIN number in which they can access the secure server. "E-Statements also are available several days before the paper statements are mailed. Members receive an email message announcing the statement is ready." Stop at the member services desk today to sign up for E-Statements.

Annual Youth Week rewards our young savers!

The National Credit Union Youth Week, April 18-24, featured teaching kids how to save money wisely. We sponsored a fun game, guessing the number of pennies in a jar. Youth who stopped in and participated while making a deposit were entered into a prize drawing. Also, youth who deposited their pennies during this week received up to a one-time \$10 match.

Youth Week and any week, really, are great times to talk to your kids about basic financial issues as related to your household: allowance policies, rules regarding odd-jobs in which kids can



Gabe and Michael Weaver

earn their own money and savings plans for cars, insurance and college.



Melanie Korish

Enjoying helping members with their dreams

Melanie Korish
Loan Officer

Melanie started with G.E.C.U. as a member services representative in October 2000. She moved to the loan department on Sept. 11, 2001. As a loan officer, Melanie handles member loan applications, determining whether income level and credit qualify them. "It's fun to help our members achieve their dreams, the car they have been saving for or the boat they always wanted," she said.

She also wants to emphasize that members should not be afraid when they fall behind on a loan. "A lot of people don't realize that we're willing to work with them. The fact is; we want to help." While individual situations vary from one to another, Melanie says G.E.C.U. can get creative to make it a win-win situation. "We'll make payment arrangements, such as adding an extra \$50 per month to clear up old payments. We can defer the loan, depending on the type and the circumstances or we can re-write the loan."

With nearly 10 years at The Friendly Credit Union, Melanie beams with pride when asked what she likes about working here. "The fact that we get to know all of our members," she says. She enjoys the creativity one needs to work in the loan department. Creativity? "Yes, you have to be creative in looking at all the different options out there for members."

Melanie and her husband Mike and son Devyn, 11, live in Onalaska. Melanie Wadding was born in Albert Lea, Minn. and lived in Pepin, Wis. with her family before moving to La Crescent, where she graduated from high school. She attended Western Technical College.

In their spare time, Melanie and her family enjoy watching Indy car racing. They have traveled to several Indy 500 races. "Melanie always has a smile for everyone," says co-worker Sue Baker. "She is my go-to person for computer questions. Melanie is helpful for members and team members alike."

New Year's Resolution pays big for G.E.C.U. Member

For Pamela Kuehl, a New Year's resolution paid off. This lucky G.E.C.U. member had made a promise to read more. The vow has been rewarding in more ways than one. "I was watching TV when the mail arrived," says Pamela Kuehl. "My husband reminded me that I had planned to read more and then gave me the G.E.C.U. newsletter." Upon reading it, Pamela came to the Mega Money winners section. "I saw my number in there, and suddenly TV wasn't so interesting. I went down to G.E.C.U., showed them my number and left \$100 richer."

In a related story, Douglas Kendhammer, Jacquelyn Hammen, and Houa Vang had made similar resolutions and saw their dedication pay off when they too won \$100. One winner had vowed to shop more; one promised themselves they would buy a new dress and one member even made a resolution to save more money.

Will your "Fully Financial, Fully Friendly" credit union promise that all its members will be

\$100 richer? Well, no. But, they can promise each member will have a chance.

Please take a minute and read these numbers:

842

3714

9243

12006

Are any of the numbers yours? If your membership number happens to be one of those listed, we promise you are about to have a fuller wallet. Stop by G.E.C.U. and leave with \$100. Simply get to G.E.C.U. by September 29, 2010 and we will see to it you leave \$100 richer.

"This promise to read more is really paying off," says Kuehl. "Later this week, I am going to go to my study and read lottery tickets."

79th annual meeting notes

Our annual meeting was held on Tuesday, March 30th at the Seven Bridges Restaurant. The meeting provides a chance for members, directors and credit union employees to gather under one roof to share concerns and opinions and discuss

our current status. Over 50 members enjoyed food and refreshments and had the opportunity to win door prizes. Congratulations to Bob Larkin, director and Dick Matushek, chairman on being relected to their board positions.

Help me Rhonda!



Q: Hey, Rhonda. I have enjoyed your Q and A these past few issues. Now, I have a question of my own. I am thinking about buying my first home. However, it seems there are so many decisions to make. Is there a program out there to help me?

A: First of all, congratulations on making the move to own your first home. It is an exciting time, and yet I know it can be a little overwhelming. But, good news - G.E.C.U. offers some of the most competitive programs around to assist people – just like you – looking to own their first home or refinance their present house. With home interest rates still quite low, I am telling our customers to look into a construction loan or a conventional home loan. However, in your case, I would recommend the Wheda Program. This is a special program for first time homebuyers. It is a 30-year term. If your credit score is 680 and over, then you will need 0% down. If it is more in the 620-679 range, then you will need 3% down.

Best of luck. And if you want any more advice please call me at **608-785-7720**.

Introducing the newest Kid's Klub member

Katie Hagen, member services representative, and her husband Robert welcomed baby Hannah Sue Hagen on Oct. 8, 2009. Hannah weighed in at 6 lbs. 8 oz. and was 20-1/2-inches long. Congratulations, Katie and Robert!



Meet the newest member of our team, Nick Neubauer, compliance officer

Nick Neubauer joined the G.E.C.U. team on Dec. 1 as our compliance officer. He makes certain that G.E.C.U. is following federal laws and regulations that are often changing. He reads up on the laws, interprets them and writes the policies for our credit union. Examples include the new NSF changes on debit cards that go into effect in July and August 2010. "I'm the go-to guy for questions regarding an operation or process."

Nick is a 2003 graduate of Melrose Mindoro High School and a recent UW-La Crosse graduate, where he earned his bachelor's degree in accounting. He grew up on a dairy farm and continues to help with crops. Nick also enjoys spending time remodeling his home, restoring muscle



cars and hunting and fishing. Nick believes his position allows him to get a taste of everything within G.E.C.U. "I'm learning the whole operation and it is a great atmosphere to do so."

Are you ready for some baseball?

It's back, the annual G.E.C.U. night at the ballpark with our very own La Crosse Loggers! Join us on Sunday, June 6th when the Loggers take on the Madison Mallards at 5:05 p.m. It's a great evening of camaraderie, baseball, Logger dogs, and more! We receive 400 tickets for our sponsorship and they go quickly, so please, plan in advance. Stop in to pick up your tickets now.



Online and Mobile Banking Opportunities

G.E.C.U.

PRESORTED STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 193
Winona, MN

Mobile Banking at G.E.C.U.

If you are on the go and your cell phone is your lifeline for all things communication, then you are in luck. G.E.C.U. is now offering mobile banking. All you need is Internet access on your phone. Log in from our website, www.gecuwi.com or go to www.itsme247.com.

Online Banking Security

Members who are signed up for online banking have recently had to change their passwords. We aren't trying to create more work for you, only to make certain that your identity and information is safe and secure. If you are experiencing problems with your password or online banking, please call a member services representative today.

Hours LOBBY

Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Holiday Hours

Lobby and Drive-Up are closed in observance of the following holidays:
Memorial Day, Monday, May 30
Independence Day, Monday, July 5
Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 6

DRIVE-UP

Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Saturday, 9:00 a.m.-Noon

NCUA