

# Member **Advantage**



NEWS FROM BELGIAN-ALLIANCE CREDIT UNION • FALL 2009

## *Pay for it with your Credit Union MasterCard...* **Pay it forward with your Choice Rewards points**



*You can redeem your Choice Rewards points to make a donation to either of two national charitable organizations.*

*For more information, call 1-888-546-5487 or visit the Choice Rewards website at [www.choicerewards.ca](http://www.choicerewards.ca)*

If you have a Credit Union MasterCard, chances are you've already heard of the Choice Rewards program, which allows you to collect points every time you use your Choice Rewards MasterCard for purchases.

The points you receive can then be redeemed for merchandise and travel rewards. Those features alone make the Choice Rewards program enticing, but did you know you can also redeem your Choice Rewards points for donations to two national charitable organizations?

By calling the Customer Contact Centre at 1-888-546-5487, you can use your points to make a charitable donation to either the Canadian Cancer Society or the United Way of Canada. A minimum donation of 2,500 points

(the equivalent of a \$25 donation) is required. Tax receipts will be issued by the charitable organization and will be sent to you directly on a bi-annual basis.

The **Canadian Cancer Society** is a national, community-based organization of volunteers, whose mission is the eradication of cancer and the enhancement of the quality of life of people living with cancer.

The **United Way of Canada** provides guidance and support to Canada's 119 United Ways, which work locally to create opportunities and change living conditions for the better.

For more information on the Choice Rewards program and its charitable donations component, visit their site at [www.choicerewards.ca](http://www.choicerewards.ca). ■



Canadian  
Cancer  
Society

[www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca) • 1-888-939-3333



United Way  
Canada

[www.unitedway.ca](http://www.unitedway.ca) • 1-800-267-8221



[www.choicerewards.ca](http://www.choicerewards.ca) > Charitable Giving



## **Photos wanted** for credit union calendar

We're looking for high-quality photos of Manitoba, by Manitobans, for our 2011 Credit Union Wall Calendar.

The photographer of each photo selected will receive **\$100.00, photo credit** in the calendar and **five free calendars** to share with friends. Contest details are available at any branch or online at [www.creditunion.mb.ca](http://www.creditunion.mb.ca)

Deadline for entries is November 27, 2009



# Keep safety tips in mind when shopping with your Member Card

As the holidays approach, many members will soon be using their Member Cards to make purchases at a wide variety of places. The convenience and ease of use of debit cards is one of the reasons they're so popular. In fact, the Interac Association reports that during the busiest shopping days of the year, it's not unheard of for Manitobans to make well over half a million debit transactions in a single day.

But with all those transactions taking place, the association encourages members to keep debit card safety in mind when using your Member Card.

While the Interac network is among the safest networks in the world, debit card fraud can occur if proper precautions aren't taken. The credit union would like to suggest the following tips to keep your Member Card safe when shopping:

- 1 Use your hand or body to shield your PIN during every transaction;
- 2 Keep your debit card in sight when conducting transactions at the checkout;
- 3 Check your banking statements regularly and contact the credit union immediately if you detect any unusual activity;
- 4 Notify the credit union immediately if your Member Card is lost, stolen or retained by an ATM;
- 5 Avoid telling anyone else your PIN, including friends and family. Only you should know it; and
- 6 Use a unique PIN that can't be easily guessed. Avoid numbers like your date of birth, telephone number or social insurance number.



## Interac a homegrown innovation

Here's a fun fact not everyone may be aware of: the Interac network is a distinctly Canadian innovation. The network was developed to serve as a single national debit network and went on to revolutionize the way people carry money, pay for goods and services and complete other banking transactions. Today, Canada (104) is second only to Sweden (125) in terms of the total number of debit card transactions per person per year. Manitobans alone made 130 million debit card transactions in 2008.

Some other uniquely Canadian inventions:

- The light bulb
- The paint roller
- The garbage bag
- Frozen dinners

*Beware of phoney e-mail requests for information*

## Phishing scammers posing as the tax man

It's unfortunately quite common these days to receive e-mails purportedly from legitimate financial institutions requesting personal information for fraudulent purposes. These scams, typically referred to as "phishing" scams, use phoney e-mails and websites to lure unsuspecting victims into handing over critical personal information, such as social insurance numbers, credit card information, bank account details and passport numbers.

Members should keep in mind that the credit union — and any legitimate financial institution — will never ask for personal information by e-mail. If you receive a questionable e-mail, the best advice is always to contact the institution directly to inquire about the validity of the request.

However, members may not be aware of a similar phishing scam currently making the rounds which involves fraudulent communications purportedly from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). As with other instances of phishing, the phoney e-mail requests personal information. In this case, however, the request is made so that the taxpayer can supposedly receive a refund or benefit payment.

The CRA has advised that taxpayers should not respond to these fraudulent communications. The agency says it will not request personal information of any kind from a taxpayer by e-mail and that it will not divulge taxpayer information to another person unless formal authorization is provided by the taxpayer. The CRA also says it will not leave personal information on an answering machine.

If you have concerns about an e-mail you've received, you're encouraged to visit the Canada Revenue Agency's website at [www.cra-arc.gc.ca](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca). ■

# Rising bankruptcy levels underscore the need for good money management

Recent studies on the level of consumer bankruptcies in Canada have underscored the importance of good savings habits, avoiding unnecessary debt and overall sound money management.

Data released earlier this year by Equifax Canada revealed that Canadians across the country are filing for bankruptcy in increasing numbers. The study found that consumer bankruptcies in November 2008 increased nine per cent over the same period a year earlier. Meanwhile, a subsequent report released by BMO Capital Markets said that consumer bankruptcies in May 2009 were 33.3 per cent higher than a year earlier. The BMO report noted that consumer bankruptcies have been increasing since the end of 2005.

Bankruptcy is something no one wants to face. It carries with it a significant financial cost and also puts undue strain on relationships and families. Unfortunately, with a weakened economy and high personal debt levels, many Canadians find themselves in exactly that situation.

The key to avoiding bankruptcy is a proper understanding of what you're getting into before signing on for more debt, as well as establishing consistent, reliable savings habits.

If you're concerned about the level or type of debt you've assumed, or if you need advice on products that might make saving easier, stop by or call the credit union and speak to a member service representative. We have many products and services that may be quite useful to you, and we'd be happy to help. ■



*As well as financial costs, bankruptcy puts significant strain on families and relationships.*

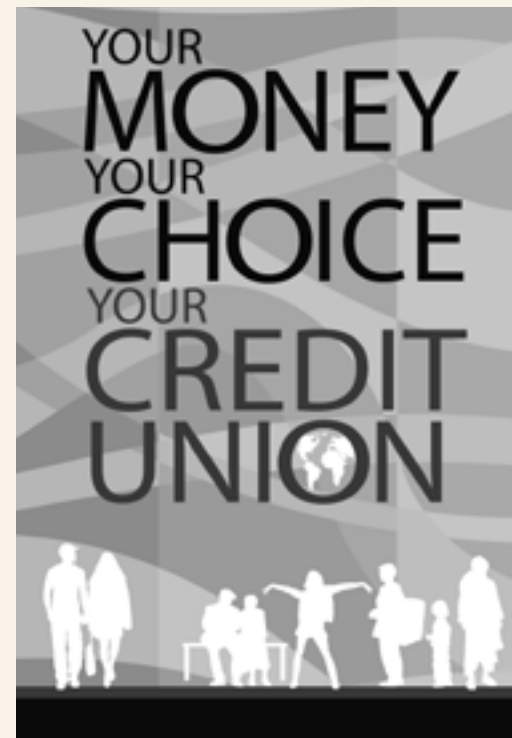
## *Celebrate with us on Thursday, October 15* **International Credit Union Day**

Each year, credit unions across the country use the third Thursday in October to mark International Credit Union Day. International Credit Union Day is a chance for credit unions and members to celebrate the unique advantages offered by co-operative financial institutions, including democratic member control, member economic participation and concern for community.

Some of those advantages are highlighted in the theme for this year's event, "Your Money, Your Choice, Your Credit Union." The theme reflects what members already know about credit unions: that financial institutions owned and controlled by their members are open, democratic and put people before profits.

This year, International Credit Union Day falls on Thursday, October 15, during Co-op Week (October 11 to 17). Co-op Week is a uniquely Canadian event that began in francophone communities in the late 1950s and became a national event in 1982. The week is meant to celebrate the contributions co-operatives have made both in Canada and abroad.

***You're invited to celebrate International Credit Union Day with us on October 15. Be sure to mark your calendar, and watch for more details at your branch.***



**Notice to members** ▼

## Call for nominations Board of Directors

Belgian-Alliance Credit Union's Annual General Meeting is slated for April 2010 and three member positions on the Board of Directors are up for election.

In order to run as a Director, nomination forms must be completed and the person must be nominated by an existing member. Applications, including a biographical résumé, must be received by December 31, 2009. Nomination forms can be picked up at 1177 Portage Avenue, and submitted to:

The Nominating Committee  
Belgian-Alliance Credit Union Ltd.  
1177 Portage Ave  
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0T2

### HOLIDAY HOURS

**Monday, October 12**

*Closed for Thanksgiving*

**Wednesday, November 11**

*Closed for Remembrance Day*

**Thursday, December 24**

*Open until 3:00 PM*

**Friday, December 25**

*Closed for Christmas*

**Monday, December 28**

*Closed for Boxing Day*

**Thursday, December 31**

*Open until 3:00 PM*

**Friday, January 1**

*Closed for New Years Day*

**Monday, February 15**

*Closed for Louis Riel Day*

*Belgian-Alliance*  
Credit Union 

The **Member Advantage** newsletter is published quarterly to inform members about financial matters and the credit union's activities.

Your comments and story ideas are welcome. Send or bring them to any branch, or e-mail to:

[info@belgiancu.mb.ca](mailto:info@belgiancu.mb.ca) or  
[mail@alliancecu.ca](mailto:mail@alliancecu.ca)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
**Richard Gregoire**

#### PROVENCHER BRANCH

387 Provencher Boulevard  
Winnipeg MB R2H 0G9  
Tel 982-3400 • Fax 233-8644  
Mon-Wed 9:30 am-5 pm  
Thur-Fri 9:30 am-6 pm

#### PORTAGE AVENUE BRANCH

1177 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg MB R3G 0T2  
Tel 927-0460 • Fax 927-0461  
Mon-Wed 9:30 am-5 pm  
Thur-Fri 10 am-5:30 pm

#### MAPLES BRANCH

101-930 Jefferson Avenue  
Winnipeg MB R2P 1W1  
Tel 927-0450 • Fax 927-0451  
Mon-Wed 9:30 am-5 pm  
Thur-Fri 10 am-5:30 pm

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT  
Remi Brengman  
VICE-PRESIDENT  
Bohdana Bashuk  
SECRETARY  
Joanne Mercier  
Casey Van Gorp  
Peter Manastyrsky  
Jim Beaulieu  
Bob Seys  
Marcel Daeninck

## Savings and Term Deposit Accounts

Belgian-Alliance Credit Union has many different savings vehicles to choose from — short or long term, registered or non-registered — to help you save for Christmas, that new car or your retirement.

- **Plan 24** is a great choice for day-to-day savings with low service charges and interest that accrues daily. With the **Daily Premium** your interest is based on a tiered balance; or choose our **Monthly Premium** — our highest yielding savings account. Both offer competitive service charges and are ideal for your short-term savings plans. Also, be sure to ask one of our staff about our youth savings accounts — the **FatCat** account for kids ages 12 and under, and our **Headstart** account for those aged 13 to 17. We also offer a specially designed account for our **Golden** members aged 60 or better.
- For long-term investors we offer 1 to 5 year **term deposits** that pay interest annually. These term deposits are also available within your **Tax-Free Savings Account** plan (TFSA). Our **RRSPs** and **RRIFs** offer 1 to 5 year term rates and interest is compounded. Within your RRSP and RRIF you can also choose to **'park' your funds** in a variable savings account with a competitive interest rate that compounds semi-annually.
- And remember, all deposits are **guaranteed without limit** by the Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation. ■



You could be one of **36 members** across Canada to win your share of an

# \$18,000 Jackpot

in the Credit Union

**DIRECTPLAY AND WIN!™ Sweepstakes!**

Nine winners will be picked every week for the entire month of November!

DirectPlay with your **MEMBER CARD®** debit card — you're **automatically entered** for the weekly prize **every time** you complete an **INTERAC®** Direct Payment transaction.

*No purchase necessary with manual entry — ask at your branch for details.*

