

Your Money & You

Your Community Credit Union Since 1926

Vol. 11 No. 1: Winter 2004

WE'VE GOT A LOAN FOR YOU!



Thinking about remodeling your home? Buying a new car? Taking the vacation of your dreams? Whatever your plans for the new year, ECU has a loan for you.

New or Used Vehicle Loans

Cold, snowy weather is the perfect time to think about trading in your old car for a new or used SUV, mini-van or whatever vehicle you have in mind! ECU makes the loan process easy with:

- Low fixed rates
- Same rates for new and used vehicles
- Up to 100% financing
- No penalties for early payment
- An attractive 0.25% rate discount with automatic loan payments from your ECU checking or savings account

Home Equity Loans and Home Equity Lines of Credit

Are you thinking of remodeling, adding a pool or deck or taking a special trip? ECU has two home

continued on p. 2

THE VALUE OF CREDIT UNION MEMBERSHIP

Your Everett Credit Union membership gives you something you can't get from a bank: ownership. That's a fundamental difference between banks and credit unions. As big banks continue to merge in an age of "fleeting relationships," it's important to consider the differences between banks and credit unions.

A credit union is a financial cooperative providing savings plans, borrowing opportunities and other financial services based upon the combined resources of all members. As non-profit institutions, credit unions can typically charge lower rates for loans and pay higher dividends on savings. Rather than paying profits to stockholders, credit unions return earnings to members in the form of dividends or improved services. Unlike banks and other financial institutions, credit unions are member-owned, not-for-profit institutions. Member-ownership gives credit unions the incentive to focus completely on providing value to members.

Chartered in 1926 as a not-for-profit financial organization, Everett Credit Union is owned and operated by its members for the benefit of all who belong. Since our beginning as a one-room operation, we have grown to become a full-service financial institution serving more than 6,000 members.

Everett Credit Union helps members at every stage of their financial lives. Whether you're buying your first home or planning for retirement, starting a family or sending the kids to college, financing your first car or just saving for your next vacation, we offer the products and services to help you

reach your goals. With our great rates, easy application processes and dedicated staff, we'll help you save time and money.

As we grow and enjoy more successes, we will offer new products and services to our members in the coming months. All of us at Everett Credit Union value your membership and hope you'll come to us for advice and assistance with all of your financial needs.



THE *inside story*

- Financial Records: What to Keep and for How Long
- Safe Deposit Boxes
- Saving — A Great New Year's Resolution
- The ECU CD Celebration
- 10 Ways to Conquer Snow and Ice this Winter
- Annual Meeting Notice

FINANCIAL RECORDS: WHAT TO KEEP AND FOR HOW LONG

Want to get a jump start on spring cleaning? Here's what the experts recommend you keep and throw away when sorting through receipts, statements and other important documents:

Tax Records – 7 Years

The IRS has three years to audit your return based on good faith errors and six years to challenge your return if it suspects you underreported your gross income by 25% or more. Conversely, if you think you made a mistake, you have three years to file an amended claim return. Note that fraudulent or nonfiled returns may be challenged at any time.

IRA Contributions – Permanently

If you made a nondeductible contribution to an IRA, keep the records to prove that you already paid tax on this money when the time comes to withdraw.

Retirement/Savings Plan Statements – 1 Year

Keep quarterly statements until you receive the annual summary. Hold on to annual summaries until you retire or close the account.

Credit Union and Bank Records – 1 Year

Keep checks that are related to taxes, business expenses, housing and mortgage payments. Throw away those with no lasting importance.



Safe Deposit Boxes

Safeguard important documents and other valuables with a Safe Deposit Box at ECU. Enjoy the peace of mind of knowing that you have protected your family's financial future, while keeping everything under one roof. Contact a Member Service Representative today for more details.

Size	Annual Rental
5" x 5" x 24"	\$45.00
3" x 10" x 24"	\$50.00
5" x 10" x 24"	\$60.00

Bills – 1 Year

Keep bills for major expenses (cars, jewelry, furniture, etc.) to demonstrate value in the event of loss or damage. Discard other bills once the payment has cleared and the return/refund period has expired.

Credit Card Bills – 45 Days

Keep receipts until you compare them against your monthly statement. After that, only keep if disputing a bill. Keep statements for seven years if they contain tax-related expenses.

House Records – 6 Years

Keep records relating to purchase price, cost of permanent improvements, legal fees and real estate agent's commission for six years to potentially lower capital gains tax should you sell.

Paycheck Stubs – 1 Year

Verify that the information on your paycheck stubs matches your annual W-2, then throw away the stubs. If vacation/sick carryover is noted, keep the last one of the calendar year. Notify your employer in the case of any discrepancies.

WE'VE GOT A LOAN FOR YOU!

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equity loan options that can work for you.

Our fixed rate Home Equity Loan is ideal for one-time bill consolidation, home improvement, vacation, or even for refinancing an existing first mortgage! Advantages include:

- Fixed monthly payments
- Loan amounts from \$10,000 to \$200,000
- Competitive rates

Our Home Equity Line of Credit also lets you draw funds as needed without having to reapply for a loan. You have the freedom to determine the amount you borrow from your credit line and to make only the minimum required payment or pay more towards principal. This line of credit features:

- Variable rates and payments
- Credit lines from \$10,000 to \$200,000
- 10-year draw period

Both our Home Equity Loan and Home Equity Line of Credit offer access to low cost credit, available for any purpose, along with potential tax advantages (ask your professional tax advisor for complete details).

Easy Application Process

ECU loans have no application fees or prepayment penalties. Submit your application by phone by calling 1-800-287-1189 (press "1") or apply online at www.ecunion.org. Call today to find out which loan is best for you.

SAVING - A GREAT NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

The beginning of a new year is a great time to take stock of your finances – where you stand now and what your future needs will be.

An ECU representative can look at your financial picture to determine if we can help by lowering your monthly debt, reducing the interest rate you pay others, helping you start a savings plan, or reducing the fees you currently pay for some services at other financial institutions.

Here are some tips to consider if your New Year's resolution is saving more money:

Think of savings as an expense. When you pay bills, write your first check to savings. A rule of thumb is to pay yourself 10% of your income.



Set up direct deposit. Save automatically by setting up direct deposit with your employer to any ECU account.

Take advantage of sales.

Save more on clothing and other items by buying after Christmas, Easter and Independence Day when retailers typically change inventory and offer end-of-season sales.

Take the rebate, not the rate. If you're in the market for a new car, consider taking the dealer rebate and finance your auto with ECU. We can help you run the numbers before you buy to determine what option is best for you.

Start the savings habit early. Teach your children to set aside at least 10% of every allowance, gift or paycheck.

THE ECU CD CELEBRATION!

At ECU, we're celebrating the New Year with great rates on Certificates of Deposits! Look for special offers coming to you in the mail and on our website at www.ecunion.org. Or, stop in to the branch or call 1-800-287-1189 and ask to speak with a Member Service Representative.

Make an extra payment. One extra principal-only mortgage payment a year on a 30-year mortgage could help you pay off your loan in 22 years versus 30. If you're trying to pay off credit cards, always make more than the minimum payment.

Compare options. No matter what kind of financial decision you are making, take the time to compare annual fees, grace periods, rates, financing terms, early withdrawal penalties, etc. Visit the ECU website at www.ecunion.org for easy access to a variety of financial calculators.

10 WAYS TO CONQUER SNOW AND ICE THIS WINTER

As we all know, Jack Frost came early this season! Protect yourself, your family and your vehicle during the long winter by considering the following safety tips:

1. **Keep it clean.** Take the time to clean off your entire car from ice and snow. Not only will you have improved visibility, but snow from the roof of your car won't blind others as they're driving.
2. **Always use your seat belt.** Insist that other passengers buckle up, too.
3. **Remember some areas freeze first.** Ice is likely to form first on roadways with shady areas, bridges and overpasses, and at intersections.
4. **Take it slow.** Skids are caused by rapid acceleration or braking during inclement weather. To maintain control, anticipate stops and turns, and plan accordingly.
5. **Minimize brake use.** Keep within a steady and safe speed. If you need to reduce speed, apply a gentle and slow force when braking to avoid locking and skidding.
6. **Follow at a safe distance.** More than double the distance that you would normally use to follow the car ahead of you.
7. **Keep your headlights on low beam.** You'll reduce glare from snow and make it easier for other drivers to see.
8. **If your car does become stuck...** Your engine may be your sole source of heat. Open a window slightly and brush snow away from exhaust pipe to prevent potential carbon monoxide poisoning.
9. **Maintain a winter driving kit.** Keep the following items in your trunk in case of emergencies: tire chains, small bag of abrasive material (sand, salt, or kitty litter), traction mats, snow shovel, snow brush, ice scraper, booster cables, blanket, flashlight and warning devices (flares or triangles).
10. **Minimize your car trips.** Consider staying home during periods of extreme weather.

MEMBER SERVICES

Checking

Value Checking Value Checking Plus

Savings

Statement Savings Money Market Accounts
 Certificates of Deposit Club Accounts

Borrowing

Mortgages & Home Equity Auto Loans
 Personal Loans Credit Cards

Access

ATM/Debit Cards Online Applications
 Call 24 Account Access Direct Deposit
 Select Employee Groups

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

All Members are invited to join us at our Annual Meeting to be held on Tuesday, February 17, 2004 at 4:30 p.m. in the credit union lobby. New Directors will be elected and reports will be read from the Board Chairman, Treasurer, and all Committee Chairs. For more information, please contact ECU at 1-800-287-1189.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Thursday, January 1, 2004

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

Monday, January 19, 2004

PRESIDENTS' DAY

Monday, February 16, 2004

PATRIOTS' DAY

Monday, April 19, 2004

HOURS OF OPERATION

Lobby

Monday through Wednesday,
8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, 8:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – Noon

Drive-Up Window

Open weekdays,

7:30 a.m. – Closing

Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – Noon



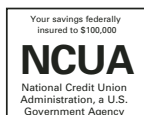
650 Broadway
Everett, MA 02149

(617) 389-9000

(800) 287-1189

Fax: (617) 381-6231

www.ecunion.org



Additional \$150,000 insured per member.

DIVIDENDS

SHARE/SAVINGS	RATE	APY
Savings \$25 min. bal.	0.40%	0.40%
Value Checking no min. bal.	0.00%	n/a
Checking Plus \$6.00 fee on balances below \$1,000.00 and no dividends earned for the period		
\$1,000 to 1,999.00 bal.	0.25%	0.25%
\$2,000 & above bal.	0.40%	0.40%
Money Market min. bal. \$2,500		
\$0 to 2,499.99	0.00%	0.00%
\$2,500 to 9,999.99	0.50%	0.50%
\$10,000 to 24,999.99	0.75%	0.75%
\$25,000 to 39,999.99	1.00%	1.00%
\$40,000 & above	1.25%	1.26%
Holiday Club \$5 min. bal.	0.40%	0.40%
Vacation Club \$5 min. bal.	0.40%	0.40%

SHARE CERTIFICATES

Terms available from 6 Months to 5 Years.

\$500 minimum balance.

Visit our website at www.ecunion.org for current rates.

INTEREST RATES

LOANS	APR	TERM	% DOWN
ECU Classic Visa (No Annual Fee)	9.90%	revolving	
Overdraft Line of Credit	11.90%	revolving	
VEHICLES*			
NEW	4.49%	2-3 yrs	0.0%
	4.99%	4-5 yrs	0.0%
	5.24%	6 yrs	0.0%
USED	4.49%	2-3 yrs	0.0%
	4.99%	4-5 yrs	0.0%
	5.24%	6 yrs	0.0%
Used Car/Truck (1997 & Older)	6.99%	2 yrs	0.0%
Motorcycles			
NEW	6.49%	2-3 yrs	0.0%
	7.49%	4-5 yrs	0.0%
	7.74%	6 yrs	0.0%
USED	8.49%	2-3 yrs	0.0%
Personal Loan (Unsecured)*	10.25%	1 yr	
	10.75%	2 yrs	
	11.25%	3 yrs	
	11.75%	4 yrs	
	13.75%	5-6 yrs	
Share Secured Loan	4.40%	1-5 yrs	
(Current Share Rate + 4.00%)			

* Includes 0.25% rate reduction for automatic payment from ECU Share or Share Draft account.

MORTGAGE/EQUITY

Call (617) 389-9000 or (800) 287-1189 for current rates on Mortgages and Home Equity Loans.

All rates quoted as of January 1, 2004 and are subject to change without notice.