

SOLUTIONS

A close-up photograph of a woman with short, wavy brown hair and blue eyes, smiling warmly. She is holding a baby with light brown hair and blue eyes, who is also smiling. Both are wearing white clothing. The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting.

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No Bail-out Money Needed Here

The Financial Cooperative (Credit Union) *Difference*

Time after time, and even more so recently, we hear stories of how the economy is affecting the lives of those around us. Take the following story for instance...

Recently, I had my vehicle serviced at a local auto dealership. While introducing myself to the Service Manager, he asked me where I worked. I proudly told him Achieva Credit Union. He immediately shared a story about his neighbor who experienced some of the emotional highs and lows that are unfortunately fairly common these days.

The Service Manager's neighbor had recently retired, and on the day he retired, his wife was laid off from her job. Even though he will have a solid retirement income, they were justifiably concerned about the drastic change in their financial situation. They called their financial institution (not a credit union) to ask what they should do,

since they knew their income was going to decrease. Instead of trying to reward this proactive consumer with some much-needed individual attention, the financial institution stated it was unwilling to assist in any way with their current situation, as they were not delinquent on their first and second mortgages at the present time.

I shared with the Service Manager how credit unions are different. As a financial cooperative, our members are our owners. We focus on member value and taking care of individuals one at a time, on a case-by-case basis, and will sit down with them to consider their options. Our employees know how valuable each and every member is to the credit union, and take a personal interest in getting to know them as an individual and not just as a "number."

Fortunately, credit unions are shining during this economic downturn. Our

roots go back to the Great Depression and our business model is built for good and tough economic times. Credit union membership is always a wise financial decision for anyone, with the value of membership being more obvious right now.

Being a credit union, we're not interested in bail-out money. However, we are interested in guiding our members through these difficult economic times. I'm confident the Service Manager's neighbor would have had a more positive experience with Achieva Credit Union if he had been a member.

Sincerely,



Gary Regoli

Gary Regoli
Achieva Credit Union
President and CEO

The Achieva Scholarship Program Is Here

Achieva Credit Union will be accepting applications for our 2009 Scholarship program from February 1, 2009, through April 3, 2009. We will award a total of ten \$1,000 scholarships to active Achieva members who are either graduating high school seniors, or currently enrolled in a college or trade school. Complete details and an application will be available online at www.AchievaCU.com and in our branches soon. Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to help achieve your college dream!

Our Main Avenue Branch Is Now Open Saturdays

For your convenience, our branch at 25 Main Avenue in Clearwater is now open on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. We look forward to seeing you!



Build Your *Nest Egg* with an IRA

What's on your financial to-do list – Save for retirement? Trim taxes?

By contributing to an individual retirement account (IRA), you can check them both off your list! Both traditional IRAs and Roth IRAs offer advantages that can help your savings grow faster, plus your earnings accumulate tax-deferred.* In addition, contributions to a traditional IRA may be tax-deductible, depending on your income and participation in an employer's retirement plan. See your tax advisor for details.

Ask us how our IRA Accounts can give you peace of mind. For more information, call (727) 431-7680, visit www.AchievaCU.com, or stop by your local Achieva branch today!

For 2008, you can contribute up to \$5,000 to any combination of traditional and Roth IRAs.** If you're age 50 or older, you may make an additional \$1,000 "catch-up" contribution. You have until April 15, 2009, to make a contribution for the 2008 tax year. Contributions for 2009 can be made from January 1, 2009, through April 15, 2010.

* Please consult the IRS or your tax specialist to determine all that applies to you. Premature withdrawals may be subject to income taxes and a 10% IRS-imposed penalty.

** These figures are correct for 2008 and are subject to change under IRS Rules.

Retirement Planning & Rollover Specialist



Pre-Retirement Planning:

- IRAs
- Roth IRAs
- Rollover IRAs
- 401(k) Rollovers
- 403(b)/TSA
- DROP Planning

Post-Retirement Planning:

- Retirement Income Planning
- Retirement Distribution Planning

Wealth Management Services:

- Trust Services
- Professional Money Management
- Fee-Based Financial Plans



To schedule a no-cost, no-obligation appointment, call (727) 431-7309 today!



Steven Nordbeck, CFP

VP, Financial Advisor
Trust Liaison Officer

B.A. Finance-University of South Florida
Financial Planning Association-Member
19 years financial services experience

Representatives are registered, securities are sold, and investment advisory services offered through CUNA Brokerage Services, Inc. (CBSI), member FINRA/SIPC, a registered broker/dealer and investment advisor, 2000 Heritage Way, Waverly, Iowa 50677, toll-free (866) 512-6109. Trust services available through MEMBERS Trust Company. **Non-deposit investment and insurance products are not federally insured, involve investment risk, may lose value and are not obligations of or guaranteed by Achieva Credit Union.** CBSI is under contract with the financial institution, through the financial services program, to make securities available to members.

Investing Through Hard Times

Shift Your *Sights to Save*

Recent sticker shock in the grocery aisles and at the pump has forced many to shun senseless spending. Feeling deprived, they wait for the economy to recover so that they can shop until they drop again with a clear conscience. However, pricey times can teach priceless lessons.

Modify Your Mindset

While it may feel like you have less to invest when times are tight, you may find less is more – if you have the right mindset. Begin building these saving-savvy habits in the hardest of times and they'll be that much easier to maintain after the economy perks up.

Redefine rich. If you feel poor when you walk through the mall or flip through a catalog, stop doing those things. Choose pastimes that make you feel intrinsically rich instead. Read a book to a child, enjoy a beautiful sunset with a friend, or take a walk and stop frequently to smell the roses.

Stay focused. The average American is blitzed with hundreds of advertising messages each day – not just in mainstream media but on buses, in sports arenas and even in schools. You can't always control whether you see these messages, but you can control whether you act upon them. Head off impulse buys by making a list of your best memories. At moments of weakness, consider how making that one impulse buy compares to the things that really matter to you. Chances are, the comparison will put things into perspective and you can walk away with your money still in your wallet.

Remember: Misery loves company. It may feel like you have it worse than

everyone else, but do you really? Most people don't like airing their money worries, but in this economy it's a safe bet that everyone has at least one or two. You can keep your social circle intact through hard times by suggesting lower-cost ways of having fun. Host a game night with potluck snacks, and organize a rotating schedule for others to host at their homes.

Be the adult. Kids may not understand why you continually say no to their pushes for more gadgets and goodies – so try not to say no. Instead, give them options. Would they rather have \$20 for the arcade now or an entire home video game system at birthday time? Better yet, encourage your children to save their own money.

Make trade-offs. Finding money to invest now means making choices – not giving up everything. Cable TV may be one of your largest bills, but if you watch it daily you may decide to keep it and skip going to the movies every weekend.



Getting What You Really Deserve

There's a world of difference between deprivation and delayed gratification. You may deserve a treat now, but will that treat limit your future or help fulfill it? Forgoing frills now can help fund a fertile future.

A consultation with one of our Member Service Representatives can help you make the most of your newfound savings. Call us at **(727) 431-7680** or stop by your local Achieva branch today!

INVESTMENT PRODUCTS:

- Not insured by any federal agency
- Not a deposit of this financial institution
- May lose value



Simple Steps to Stockpile Savings

Small savings here and there can add up. Each month, you can save:

- \$15 – Scrounge 50 cents a day from your pockets, purses and couch cushions.
- \$20 – Go to the library – instead of the book store – once a month.
- \$25 – Set up automatic payment to avoid a credit card late fee.
- \$60 – Drink coffee instead of cappuccino; save about \$3 daily.
- \$100 – Brown-bag your lunch; save about \$5 each day.

A New Way to Stay Connected

Social Networking for the *Over 50 Crowd*



You're no slouch when it comes to the Internet. You've been e-mailing, shopping and banking online for years. But social networking is best left to the kids ... right? Not anymore.

Americans over age 50 have flocked to social networking sites to chat with friends, join discussion and dating forums, and discuss topics that affect them and their families. Like Facebook and MySpace – the sites your kids or grandkids frequent – social networking sites aimed at boomers on up offer ways to stay connected to friends and family, preserve memories and play games – for free.

But you won't run into your grandchildren on sites like **Eons.com***, **TBD.com*** and **Multiply.com***. Most sites ensure you're

communicating with your peer group by requiring users to be age 50 or older to register and participate. With about 68% of Americans age 50-59 online,** there are plenty of potential participants.

Joining the social networking scene allows you to share photos with friends and family, post profiles and join public or private discussion groups about issues that matter to you, from diet and fitness to health care and retirement expenses. Some sites even help you safeguard and share your life experiences with online scrapbooks, or voice or video chat with loved ones near and far.

* Website provided for information only. No endorsement is implied.

** Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project.

SPCA Pet Walk



Our Achieva Paw Prints Team, with their four-legged friends, once again took part in the Society for the

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) Tampa Bay's annual fundraising Paws on Parade Pet Walk. The walk took place Oct. 18, 2008, at North Shore Park in St. Petersburg. The Achieva team collected \$1,825 in donations for the animals. Way to go! The SPCA's total amount from the fundraiser was over \$212,000. The SPCA does not receive any funding from the state to run its shelter, and relies solely on the generosity of the community to save the lives of approximately 15,000 animals that pass through its facility each year.

Great American Teach-In

Nov. 19, 2008 was a big day for Pinellas County Schools as community businesses, students' family members and friends visited schools for the Great American Teach-In. Eighteen employees from Achieva Credit Union visited 20 schools and taught more than 1,000 students about financial literacy. Classes ranged from kindergarteners and first graders who learned about savings, to high school students learning about loans, credit, and how important it is to maintain a good credit background. The day was a great success and we can't wait to be a part of it again next year!



Need a Refresher Course on *Credit Union Benefits?*

Whether credit union membership is new to you or you've been a member for decades, it's easy to underestimate all the advantages a credit union provides. The following word find can help you brush up. Look for the 13 terms highlighted below, which can be found going forward, backward, horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

- You can handle your finances anytime, anywhere with **sophisticated** tools such as free Home Banking, Online Bill Pay, e-Statements & Account Alerts, and MoneyLine.
- Anyone who lives or works in Pinellas, Pasco or Hernando County, or is related to an Achieva member, is **eligible** to bank with us.
- We offer **personalized** solutions to your financial needs.
- If you know someone who could reap the **countless** benefits of credit union **membership**, invite them to check us out. Encourage them to stop by, call **(727) 431-7680** or visit us online at www.AchievaCU.com for more information.

- Unlike banks, which focus on providing profits to outside investors, credit unions are **cooperative** and **member-owned**.
- Credit union membership lasts a **lifetime**.
- Because we want you to achieve financial success, we offer a variety of **education** programs to help you take charge.
- We work hard to help you reach your financial **goals**, such as saving for retirement, paying for college, managing debt or buying a home.
- Excellent service has become rare in the light of big bank mergers, but member **satisfaction** continues to be one of our top priorities.
- Credit union members reap the **value** of more **competitive** rates and lower fees than most banks offer.

(Answers on page 7)

Y	D	P	D	G	B	N	Z	Q	B	V	J	J	C	S
N	Z	W	E	V	I	T	A	R	E	P	O	O	C	A
N	Q	Y	T	R	J	O	M	L	W	T	P	E	R	T
P	T	C	A	E	S	D	M	A	S	J	P	L	J	I
I	L	O	C	D	N	O	A	J	K	Q	V	I	Z	S
H	I	U	I	U	G	R	N	H	W	Y	E	G	K	F
S	F	N	T	C	L	D	X	A	F	U	A	I	O	A
R	E	T	S	A	L	D	H	V	L	I	R	B	Z	C
E	T	L	I	T	Q	R	F	A	M	I	E	L	L	T
B	I	E	H	I	U	S	V	Z	B	T	Z	E	P	I
M	M	S	P	O	B	J	G	Z	O	K	W	E	R	O
E	E	S	O	N	L	E	U	L	O	M	O	T	D	N
M	Q	O	S	P	Q	Z	S	L	A	O	G	N	U	V
J	D	E	N	W	O	R	E	B	M	E	M	X	C	M
G	C	O	M	P	E	T	I	T	I	V	E	O	C	D

4th Grade Foresters for Florida Project

Achieva partnered with 4th Grade Foresters for Florida to educate students on how to help reverse the effects of global warming and air pollution, and be wise stewards of the environment. Many neighborhood schools participated in this program where Achieva provided 4th grade students with a tree to plant in their home

community in observation of Florida's Arbor Day, Jan. 16. Because of this program, millions of children have planted seedlings that have grown into millions of trees. But somehow, in the past few years, this tradition began to fade away. It's time to reverse the decline, and you can be a part of it – go plant a tree today!

Using Credit Wisely in *Uncertain Times*

In today's fast-paced culture, it's often easier to use a credit card for purchases rather than write a check or pay with cash. Many people rely on credit to stay on top of their finances and expect competitive rates and credit limits. However, the current economic slump has forced many Americans to tighten their wallets, resulting in increasing levels of credit card debt.

To complicate matters, the credit crisis that hit the housing market is now affecting the credit card industry – giving companies reason to raise rates and lower credit limits to trim their own losses.

Although the credit crisis may seem disheartening, there's a silver lining. Achieva Credit Union has remained steady in rocky times. We understand our members' financial circumstances, which is why we continue to offer great rates on our credit cards.

Using a credit card is easy and convenient, but managing it wisely gives you the ultimate advantage. Here are tips for keeping credit in check:

- **Pay your bills on time.** This will help you avoid much-dreaded late fees. Focusing on good credit management can also build a positive credit history.
- **Look over the little items.** Everyday expenses, such as coffee, magazines and snacks add up quickly. Consider using cash or your Achieva Debit MasterCard® to purchase these items.
- **If you overspend, fix it.** It happens: you go over your credit limit and are charged a penalty. If you spend more than allowed, call us right away and we'll help you make a plan for returning your balance to the allotted amount.

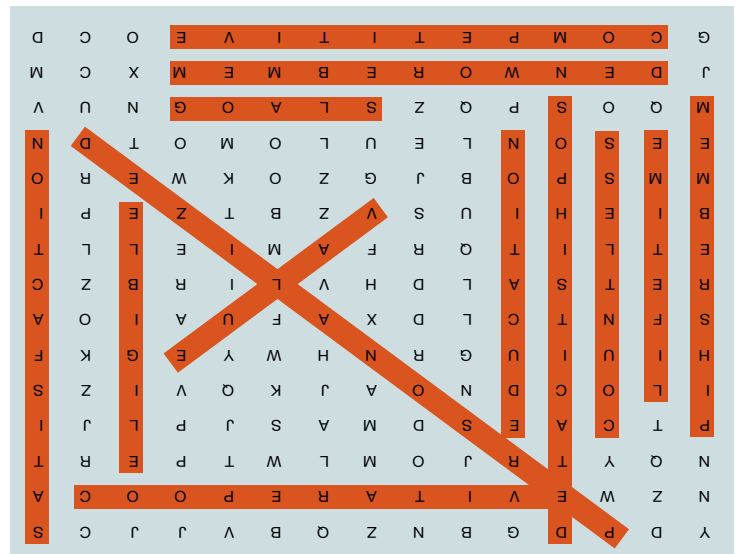
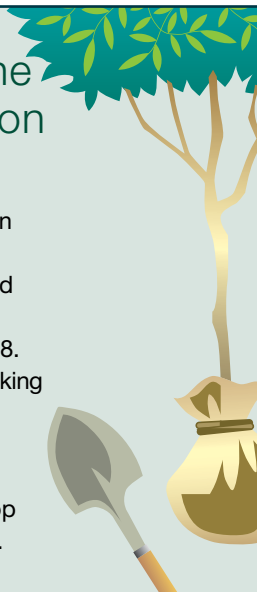
Achieva Credit Union offers VISA® credit cards that can be trusted. Our cards have



no annual fee, great low rates, local service and more. To apply for an Emerald Cash Rewards VISA or a VISA Platinum credit card, visit www.AchievaCU.com, call (727) 431-7680 or stop by an Achieva branch, today.

Going Green with the Arbor Day Foundation

In partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation, Achieva planted a tree on behalf of every member who opened a new Emerald Checking account and activated free e-Statements from Oct. 15, 2008, through Dec. 15, 2008. Our high-yield interest Emerald Checking account is a must-have for both you and our environment. For more information, call (727) 431-7680, visit www.AchievaCU.com, or stop by your local Achieva branch today.



Crossword Answers

Saturday Seminar *Café*

Let's face it: Solid information is a key ingredient to making informed decisions about your financial future.

We can help! Our seminars are offered to our members and the community. They are held one Saturday each month, from 9 to 10:30 a.m. at our Largo office, unless otherwise noted.



DROP Distribution Planning
Steve Nordbeck, CFP, Achieva
Financial Planning & Trust Services
Jan. 24

Credit Score Analysis
Joanne Whittlesley, Consumer
Credit Counseling Services
March 14

Income Tax Planning
Anette Kendall, E.A., A-1 Accounting
and Business Services, Inc.
Feb. 21

Wills and Trusts
Attorney Mary Selter,
Fisher & Sauls, P.A.
April 18



Space is limited, so be sure to RSVP to **(727) 431-7362**.



Topics and dates are subject to change. Please visit **www.AchievaCU.com/happenings/seminars.asp** for up-to-date listings, or to register online.

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