

Office Hours and Locations

77 No. Main St. * Brewer

229 Dirigo Dr. * Brewer

Mailing Address

PO Box 189

Brewer, ME 04412

Lobby & Drive -Through

Mon. - Wed. 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Thur. - Fri. 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

E-mail Address

info@brewerfcu.org

Phone & Fax Numbers

Phone (207) 989-7240

77 No. Main St. · Fax: 989-3440

229 Dirigo Dr. · Fax: 989-5985

Member Audio Response System

Phone - 989-4947

Our Services

Bill Payer

Business Loans

Club Accounts

Consumer Loans

Copy of Share Draft

Corporate Drafts

Direct Deposit (ACH)

E-Statements

GAP Coverage

Gift Cards

Health Savings Accounts (HSAs)

Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs)

Member Privilege

Merchant Card Processing

Mobile Banking

Money Markets

Money Orders

Mortgage Loans

Night Deposit

Online Banking

Payroll Deduction

Roth IRA

Route 66 Extended Warranty

SBA Loans

Share (Savings) Accounts

Share Certificates

Share Draft (Checking) Accounts

Statement Copy

Stop Payments

Traveler's Cards

U.S. Savings Bonds

Visa® Check Card (Debit)

Visa® Credit Cards

Wire Transfers

For Rates on our Shares, Money Manager, Share Certificates and IRA Share Certificates, please give us a call or go to our website www.brewerfcu.org.



Free the Z

On November 16th, we helped to 'Free the Z' for the third year. Our staff and their families came out to help collect turkeys for Manna Ministries with Kid from Z107.3. Kid is a DJ for the local radio station. He braves the weather each year parked in the Brewer Hannaford parking lot with a goal of collecting turkeys for Thanksgiving. This year's goal was 2010 frozen gobblers. We saw many turkeys come in during our short 2 hour stay. We also offered an incentive to those who donated, a \$50 Visa gift card to one lucky turkey donors draw at random. The credit union looks forward to helping out again next year, when the goal will be increased to 2011.

Want to spend more sensibly next holiday season?

Welcome to the club

The holidays are a time of giving – but for many of us, they're also a time of borrowing. Unless you've put money aside for gifts and festivities, the season of "Ho ho ho" may leave your credit card balance up, up, up.

We can help. Among the savings choices you'll find at your credit union is our highly convenient club account. To help you better prepare for the 2011 holiday season, we'll help you arrange automatic transfers from your paycheck or checking account into your club account every week or pay period. You never see the money, so you can't spend it!

Even small amounts can make a big difference. For example, \$10 a week is \$520 a year. If you're paid twice a month, can you spare \$35 per paycheck? In a year, you'd have an impressive \$840.

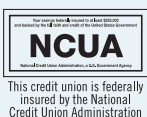
Get in touch with us to find out more about our club account. The sooner you start, the more you'll save – and the better your chances of putting more "ho ho" into the holidays.

When the weather outside is frightful...

In northern New England, bad weather during winter vacation is a given. But in recent years, parents who might once have said, "Go out and play in the snow" are now faced with sleet or rain and no easy answer to cries of "I'm bored! There's nothing to do."

If your kids are too young to entertain themselves by texting, tweeting, or gaming (or you want them to quit that for a while), encourage them to try these boredom-busting remedies:

- **Draw and color a mural of where you'd rather be.** A 100-foot roll of newsprint from a discount art supply store (\$15-\$25) is perfect for this. The kids can wallpaper the living room with scenes of a tropical island, an amusement park, a zoo.
- **Show them how to knit.** They'll be amazed: I can make a scarf! Out of yarn!
- **Build a fort with old sheets and boxes.** This perennial favorite with imaginative children could equally well be a castle, a hobbit house, or a Batcave.
- **Make a book.** Ask them to write a story that starts out sad but has a happy ending, using pictures cut out from old magazines and glued on construction-paper pages. (If the kids are young, you can write down the words at their dictation.)
- **Bake cupcakes and have fun frosting them.** Stripes, anyone? How about a smiley face? Or mix coconut into chocolate frosting for that spiky-hair look.
- **Hold an indoor scavenger hunt.** Make a list of items everyone has to search for, such as something square, something red, something with a hole in it, and so on. Give prizes for the most creative "finds," as well as the most items found in 20 minutes.
- **Make a tie-dyed shirt.** Pinch accordion folds or tie knots in an old white T-shirt of Dad's, and squirt it with a squeeze bottle of colorful fabric dye. (Be sure to wear rubber gloves.) Let the dye set, then unknit, rinse, and wash. Voilà: art they can wear.
- **Hold a sewing class.** Show your kids how to replace buttons and stitch up rips. You'll all have fun, and they'll learn a valuable life skill. (It may also be a subtle lesson in the value of care and repair, rather than tossing things out to buy new ones.)
- **Invent a new dance.** Get down and boogie! Little kids love to dance to their favorite music, and they'll be thrilled if you join them. It's great winter exercise for you, too.





BREWER FCU QUARTERLY NEWS

WINTER 2011

Equinox Insurance

Equinox will be at our 77 North Main Street location on the following dates in 2011 to provide FREE insurance quotes for members.

- January 28
- February 18
- March 18
- April 15
- May 20
- June 17
- July 15
- August 19
- September 16
- October 21
- November 18
- December 16

The President's Corner

It's hard to believe that it is 2011 already! Happy New Year to all.

Brewer FCU members now have the ability to review and print copies of their cleared checks online using FlexTeller, our online banking product. Simply login and go to the history of the share draft (checking) account. At the right of each check listed, you will see a "click here to view" button. Click on the button and you will be able to see and/or print the front and back of the cleared check.

Brewer FCU is now a member of the Coop Shared Branching Network. This means that members have the ability to conduct business at 120 credit union locations in Maine and over 4,000 locations nationwide, just as they would their own credit union! Members may make deposits, withdrawals and loan payments at any participating credit union location. Just look for the CU Service Center logo.



CU SERVICE CENTERS®
The Member-Friendly Financial Network

Those members who travel or head south for the winter may now access their credit union accounts from any of these locations. Call us or stop by to find a location near your destination.

Thank you to all members who helped us during our Holiday Food drive. Once again, Brewer FCU and members successfully raised a large amount of food that was donated to local food pantries. Also, thanks to our members who helped us with our annual Angel Tree project, where we collected Christmas gifts for those in need.

Brewer FCU has been very successful in all of the community events that we have participated in throughout 2010, and as always, we could not have done it without the support and assistance of our membership.

The Board of Directors and staff at Brewer FCU wish you all a happy, safe and prosperous New Year.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any suggestions or ideas.

Sincerely,
Rick Kaul
President/CEO

Good Shepherd Check Presentation

We were fortunate to be present for the presentation of a check to the Good Shepherd Food Bank, in Brewer on Nov 16. Brewer Federal Credit Union's Dave Defroschia, David Stanhope, Rick Kaul and Jason Michaud joined Jon Paradise, from the Maine Credit Union League, as well staff from Seaboard FCU and University Credit Union and the Executive Director of Good Shepherd. These funds were part of our ongoing efforts to end hunger in the Maine Credit Unions' Campaign for Hunger and will help the food bank to provide food to those in need in our area.



NEW AT THE CREDIT UNION Shared Branching



CU SERVICE CENTERS®
The Member-Friendly Financial Network

Shared branching is up and running. This allows our members to make deposits, withdrawals and loan payments at participating credit unions at throughout Maine and the US. If you see the CU Service Center swirl you will know they are shared branching participants. Locating a shared branch location can also be done online at <http://www.cuservicecenter.com> or by calling 1-800-919-2872. You may search the website for a location or download locations to your GPS for easy access while traveling. For those members using an iPhone, there is an app called 'Find Branch'. Please be sure to have your account number and a valid photo ID with you when visiting a credit union other than ours, as these are required for any transaction. Also, note that deposited funds may be held, please plan accordingly. We hope this adds another convenient service for our members.

View your cleared checks online...

We have recently added the ability to view checks that have cleared your account on Flexsteller. If you are a current flexsteller user, sign in as you normally would to view your account history. When a check has cleared the check number will appear in the description column. To the right of the draft number and amount there will be a "View Image" button. This will allow you to see an image of the front and back of the check you had written. At this step you will also have the option to print the check. If you are not currently a Flexsteller user, please contact a member service representative to sign up. It is a free service to our members.

Food Drive

Brewer Federal Credit Union would like to thank our members and staff for the generosity shown this year during our annual food drive. Again this year we were able to donate a substantial amount of food to local food banks.



Holiday Closings

Martin Luther King Jr. Day . . . Monday, January 17
Presidents' Day Monday, February 21

Angel Tree

The 2010 Angel Tree was a great success! We would like to thank our members and staff for helping to make a child's Christmas just a little brighter this year. This year with the help of our members and the brothers from Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, from the University of Maine Orono campus, we were able to fill the wished of over 100 tags between our two locations!



Making New Year's resolutions more successful

This is the time of year we promise ourselves to become a better person: kinder, thinner, more buff, more organized, more punctual, and so on. Our resolutions may also involve financial matters, such as paying off credit card debt or fully funding an IRA.

To make this praiseworthy process of renewal more successful, consider our advice:

1. **Instead of several resolutions, make one.** It may be easy to jot down an entire list of vows, but focus on a single very important one that you believe is doable. For example, suppose your resolution is to make the maximum contribution to a 2011 IRA.
2. **Write down why you're making this resolution.** Take your time and fill a paragraph, two paragraphs, a entire page. Maybe you need to feel more financially secure, you want the confidence of being a saver, or you dread becoming a financial burden on your kids later. Spell out in detail how you will feel if you do/don't carry out your vow.
3. **Don't go it alone.** Involve your spouse or partner, your best friend, maybe even your kids in discussing this resolution. (You don't have to share your reasons.) How can they help you achieve it? What obstacles can they help you overcome?
4. **Break it down into bite-sized chunks.** To make the maximum IRA contribution of \$5,000, you'd need to save \$192.30 every two weeks. Ask us to help you arrange automatic transfers from a direct-deposited paycheck into a credit union IRA. (If you're 50 or over, you can save up to \$6,000, or \$230.76 every other week.) As the saying goes: If you never see the money, you never miss it.
5. **Tempted to backslide? Revisit your rationale.** Remind yourself why you thought it was important to save for retirement. If you still decide to break your resolution, write down the reason at the bottom of the page and sign your name. Bet you won't want to!

Last, celebrate when you reach your goal. You've always tried hard to keep your word to other people. Now you deserve applause for keeping this promise to yourself.

Don't be taken for a ride on winter break

Wow, what a deal – four days and five nights at Disney World during winter break, for the cost of a trip to Canobie Lake Park! The kids would have a ball. But how can you tell whether the bargain you're being offered by phone, postcard, or email is the real thing? Here are some scam-alerting clues:

- They ask you to contact them via a phone number with an out-of-state area code or a 900 number.
- They insist you must decide right away, or the offer will expire.
- You can't pin down the price and what it covers.
- They won't give you any contact names or a direct phone number.
- They want an immediate payment to clinch the deal.

Even if the offer sounds bona fide, it's best to follow these guidelines:

- Take careful notes. Ask lots of questions, and don't accept evasive answers.
- Make sure you know the full price and what it covers. For example, how do they define "deluxe"? Is transportation included? Is there a cancellation or rescheduling fee? How about blackout dates?
- Ask for full details of the offer in writing.
- If you decide to book, pay with your credit card. Should the trip prove too good to be true, it will be easier for you to dispute the charges.

When in doubt about taxes, diversify

They used to say nothing was certain but death and taxes, but the turmoil over taxes makes it hard to be sure how much you'll owe next year and beyond. (To encourage electronic filing, which will allow regulations to be easily updated, the IRS won't be mailing out tax form booklets at year-end.)

When in doubt about the future tax status of various financial choices, our suggestion is to diversify. Diversification – putting your eggs in different baskets – is a time-tested way of reducing your risk if any one basket tips over. For instance, you might consider:

- Diversifying your retirement savings by keeping some money in a tax-deductible 401(k) or Traditional IRA, and another sum in a non-deductible Roth IRA that will be tax-free when you retire. That way, you'll be covered whether your tax rate is lower or higher in retirement.
- Putting some savings into prepaying your mortgage. Why? So whether the mortgage tax deduction stays or goes away, you'll have gained valuable home equity.

Diversification is a good idea in your credit union accounts, too. For example, by putting some of your spare cash in a certificate of deposit with a guaranteed interest rate, you'll reduce the risk of earning less if a savings account's variable interest rate declines. Or instead of putting all your money in one share certificate, you might invest in a "ladder" of several certificates that mature at different times. Otherwise, if rates rise and your money is locked up in one place, you won't have any free cash to invest at the new, higher rate.

If you're interested in making your finances more diversified, get in touch with us to discuss ideas that might work for you. However, we're not in the business of tax advice. Before you make any decisions that could affect your tax liability, we strongly recommend consulting a tax advisor.

Make a big dent in your debt in 2011

Yes, you can do it – even if you have holiday bills piling in on top of debt you already owe. Here's a step-by-step guide to developing a New Year's debt payment plan that really works:

1. Sit down at the table with your bills and sort them into "good debt" and "bad debt." *Good debt* is a loan to buy something that will gain value, like your house or a child's education. *Bad debt* is associated with buying things that lose value, like a car, a refrigerator, or a vacation. You'll focus on paying off the bad debt first.
2. Write down how much you owe and the interest rate on each of your loans or credit lines.
3. If you have a lot of bad debt at relatively high interest rates, see us about a debt consolidation loan. These loans have a fixed interest rate and fixed monthly payments, which may be lower than you're now paying.
4. If you don't go for a debt consolidation loan, chop away at the highest-rate "bad debt" first, paying more than the minimum and making extra payments whenever you can. (This is especially easy if you use our online bill payment service.)
5. Once you've paid off the bill with the highest rate, start whittling away at the next highest debt. Be patient! Slow and steady wins the race.

If credit cards tend to be your downfall, carry a debit card for everyday shopping so you can't spend more than you have on hand. Keep credit cards in a safe deposit box, so you'll have to think long and hard before using them.

4 things you may not know about IRAs (but should)

Although individual retirement accounts have been around for almost 35 years, a surprising number of the folks they're aimed at are fuzzy about these tax-sheltered ways to save. In fact, a 2008 survey by AARP Financial found that half of all Americans between the ages of 18 and 49 weren't clear on how IRAs worked. Since these are the very years when savers have the most to gain from long-term compounding, we want to debunk four myths about IRAs:

1. **You don't have to wait until April 15.** An IRA for the 2010 tax year can be opened and funded through April 15, 2011. But you don't have to wait; you can start now. In fact, many savers set up automatic deductions every month so they can stash away as much as the rules allow.
2. **You can open an IRA even if you can't contribute the maximum.** For 2010 and 2011, you can contribute as much as \$5,000 in any combination of IRAs, or \$6,000 if you're 50 or older. But if you wish, you can put in a smaller amount.
3. **With Traditional IRAs, you pay taxes later.** With Roth IRAs, you pay taxes now. Why pay now? Because everything your Roth IRA earns in the future will be tax-free. On the other hand, you might choose to postpone taxes with a deductible Traditional IRA if you think you might be in a lower bracket after retiring.
4. **You can open an IRA with almost any financial company, including ours.** Ask us about opening a Traditional or Roth IRA savings account or share certificate. Often, our rates beat most banks'.

Interested? Get in touch with us. We'll be glad to help you learn more about the ins and outs of IRAs and see if you qualify. Just one more thing to know: before making decisions that could affect your tax situation, be sure to consult a tax advisor.

Walk to End Hunger

On December 2nd, Brenda Davis, Executive Director of Crossroads Ministries, ended her annual Walk for Hunger at our Dirigo Drive branch. This year she was presented a check from the



Maine Credit Unions' Campaign for Ending Hunger, in the amount of \$1572.00. This amount represented the over 1500 miles she walked and the 72 communities that she visited over her walk this year. Brewer Federal Credit Union also presented a check to Brenda in the amount of \$100.00. WABI-TV 5 and WVII-7 joined us for the event as well as Jon Paradise with the Maine Credit Union League.