

# Member credit union Connection

## Annual Meeting 2013

Make your plans now to attend the SAFE CU Annual Meeting in March 2013. Once we confirm the date, we'll send additional information. Be a part of the direction of your credit union!

## Directors/Committees

Dolores Sennette, Chairman  
Virval Holbrook, Vice Chairman  
Deborah Scroggins, Secretary  
Georgine Guillory, Director  
Terry Bennett, Director  
Leroy Henry, Director  
Bobby Mock, Director  
Margaret Adams, President/Treasurer  
Molly Handy, Vice President  
Perry Smith, Credit Committee  
Gaynell Minkins, Credit Committee  
Gwen Ambres, Credit Committee

## Holidays Ahead

The Credit Union will be closed in observance of the following:

<b>New Year's Day</b>	Tuesday, January 1
<b>MLK, Jr. Day</b>	Monday, January 21
<b>Good Friday</b>	Friday, March 29
<b>Memorial Day</b>	Monday, May 27

## LOST OR STOLEN DEBIT CARD

1-800-264-5578

## AUTOMATED TELLER (C U Talk)

1-800-983-6380



2002 North 11th Street • Beaumont, TX 77703  
(409) 899-2542 • Fax: (409) 892-2225  
[www.safecubmt.org](http://www.safecubmt.org)

### Lobby Hours

Monday - Friday 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### New Drive-In Hours

Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
Friday 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.



"We do business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act."

## Smart Car Shoppers Can Drive a Bargain

There are new car deals to be had if you look—and shop—carefully, even though auto makers have less incentive now to cut new-car prices than in previous years.

There are several reasons that bargains are harder to come by. Consumer demand has rebounded; sales are up 15% over last year, with Chrysler Group and General Motors reporting sales increases of 20% and 16% respectively. Ford Motor sales are up 7%. Auto makers have been increasing production, slowly, which means rising sales are keeping pace with what dealers have on lots. Absent excess inventory, don't expect huge price cuts.

A smart shopper still can find bargains:

- **Favorable financing.** Credit is more available and financing deals are enticing. Check first with us and get preapproved for a loan before visiting the car lot.
- **Attractive leases.** With used-car values at relatively high levels, manufacturers tend to drop lease prices because they factor in a vehicle's expected resale price. Know your rights and responsibilities before leasing. Visit [federalreserve.gov/pubs/leasing/](http://federalreserve.gov/pubs/leasing/).
- **Model redesigns.** If price is more important to you than style, shop for cars that are due for redesigns in the 2013 model year. You'll have more room to negotiate the best deal.

If you're in the market for a used car, big savings may be elusive. It's expected that used-car prices will continue to remain relatively high.

Talk to our loan officer and prepare to visit the dealership with a preapproved loan.

## Open a Holiday Club Account NOW!

Did the holidays take a bite out of your savings account or max out your credit card? If so, we're here to help.

A Holiday Club account lets you save for holiday spending in advance rather than relying on credit cards at the last minute. You even can arrange to have the money deducted directly from your paycheck, making saving as painless as possible.

Knowing that you'll have the money to pay for the holidays will put the cheer back into this year's gift giving.

## It's "Me" 24/7

Expecting new tech this holiday season? It's already connected with It's "Me" 24/7.

You can check your account balances using your home phone, laptop or desktop computer and receive notices and much more! Visit our website at [www.safecubmt.org](http://www.safecubmt.org) and click on It's "Me" 24/7 button.

# Member Connection

## Skip a Payment

SAFE Credit Union is saying "Thanks" for your prompt loan payments by giving you a break – skip your loan payment(s) for January 2013\* and use the extra cash for whatever you choose. All loans must be current and a fee of \$20 applies for each loan.

\*Must have a positive balance on all accounts and no legal or collection proceedings pending. Credit Cards are ineligible. Qualifications do apply and forms are located in the lobby or website.

## Detecting Phony Requests

"Can I see some identification?" You've all heard it before and maybe even were a little put off by it. After all, you think, "I'm an honest person; don't I look honest?" But, that small request really is for your protection, especially when it comes to your financial business.

As a credit union member, you can expect your account information and transactions to remain confidential. While we're proud of the fact that we know many of our members, we need to take precautions. Perhaps one of our employees doesn't recognize you, especially when you call for information over the phone—again, it's done for your protection.

There are people—called information brokers—requesting account information under false identities or false pretenses and selling it to lawyers, debt collectors, and private investigators. Or they may pose as a credit union member who's misplaced an account number and use the information to take over the account.

So, especially if you call us, don't be surprised if we ask you to identify yourself with more than your Social Security number or mother's maiden name. We may ask for information only you as the accountholder should know.

Remember, we're not trying to make things difficult for you. We're doing everything possible to prevent unscrupulous people from obtaining account information they have no right to. And you can bet our credit union personnel will report anyone they suspect is illegally trying to obtain account information. Your credit union funds and account information are safe with us.

## Carelessness Can Cost You



Many Americans are concerned about someone stealing their credit card, check, or debit card numbers, but they may be ignoring one easy way thieves can access financial accounts: receipts.

Disregarding receipts that have valuable information greatly increases the risk of credit and debit card fraud. Thieves easily can find receipts with valid account numbers in trash cans. Some easy steps you can take to prevent thieves from stealing your financial information:

- Shred all preapproved credit offers, credit and debit card receipts, insurance forms, financial statements, and other paperwork containing personal and financial information;
- Check credit union statements and other financial statements monthly for discrepancies and order a credit report once a year to make sure no one else is using your personal information to obtain credit cards or services;
- Don't print your Social Security number on your checks and don't carry your Social Security card in your wallet; and
- Be hesitant about giving personal or financial information over the telephone—make sure you know the caller and know how the information will be used.

## Notice to all Credit Union Members Regarding Serving On the Board of Directors

Anyone wishing to serve on the Board of Directors for 2013 must notify the Chairman of the Nominating Committee by submitting a written letter no than January 18, 2013.

Please send the notification to:  
Chairman, Notification Committee  
SAFE Credit Union  
2002 N. 11th Street  
Beaumont, TX 77703

## Store Cards: Seldom the Better Deal

With offers of an additional 10% off your purchase or free merchandise, it's tempting to apply for credit cards from your favorite retail stores. Think twice, however, before signing up. If you don't pay the bill in full at the end of each month, you could end up paying much more than you originally would have saved.

That's because interest rates on retail cards average about ten percentage points higher than credit union credit cards.

Store cards usually offer special incentives for cardholders to increase loyalty and encourage them to spend more. The average household has about seven store-issued credit cards.

If you plan to buy a car or house in the near future, it can hurt your chances to get a loan at a favorable rate if you have many recently opened lines of credit. It's usually better to have one major credit card that you can use for all items you wish to charge.