

NorthStar

A Monthly Publication From NorthStar Credit Union <

● January 2005

NEWS

Improve Your Credit Score

Ask us how.

Your credit score reflects your credit history and payment patterns over time. Credit scores place more emphasis on recent information. In general terms, you can improve your credit score by:

● **Paying your bills on time.** Delinquent payments and collections can have a significant

negative impact on a score. Paying your bills on time is the single most important contributor to a good credit score. Even if the debt you owe is a small amount, it is crucial that you make payments on time.

● **Keeping balances low on credit cards and other "revolving credit."** High outstanding debt

on several credit cards can affect your score.

● **Maintain a "healthy" mix of credit.** Utilizing different types of credit – credit cards, auto loans, mortgages, etc. can actually help your credit rating.

One suggestion is to maintain some credit accounts with low or zero dollar balances. This shows that you are not over-using your credit and can control your debt levels.

NorthStar Credit Union offers a free credit score enhancement

program. We can help you learn more about your credit history and identify specific ways for you to improve your credit score. Simply call us or visit any of our offices to set up an appointment to get your credit score moving in the right direction.

The following fees will take effect February 1, 2005

Computer generated Overdraft Transfers (3 free/month)	\$5
Check Withdrawal by mail	\$5
Dormant Account (12 months with no activity)	\$5/month
Returned Statement	\$5/item/month
Money Order, Cashiers or Certified Check	\$10
Overdraft, Returned Deposit Item	\$30

BLOOD DRIVE

The Heartland Blood Center's mobile unit will be at the Main Office, 3 S. 555 Winfield Road on Saturday, January 29 from 10 a.m. - 1p.m. To keep waiting times to a minimum, call our main office at 630-393-7201 to schedule an appointment to donate during the above hours.



Focused on your future.

Audio Response Teller | 630.393.7201 ext. 222
Outside Chicagoland 800.983.6828
Audio Response Teller | 888.983.2424

3 S. 555 Winfield Road
Warrenville, IL 60555
630.393.7201
630.393.7353 (fax)

11901 S. 80th Avenue
Palos Park, IL 60464
708.448.8656
708.448.4742 (fax)

BP Naperville Complex
Employee Branch
150 Warrenville Road
Naperville, IL 60563
630.420.5505
630.420.4847 (fax)

Senior Flexionics/Automotive
Employee Branch
300 E. Devon Ave.
Bartlett, IL 60103
630.837.6288
630.837.2317 (fax)

www.northstarcu.org



Don't Miss Out! 5.9% VISA Balance Transfer

For a limited time, transfer existing credit card balances to a NorthStar Credit Union Platinum VISA and pay only 5.9% APR for up to 12 months!*

- Save hundreds or thousands of dollars in interest
- No balance transfer fees
- No hidden charges
- No gimmicks

Don't have a NorthStar CU Platinum VISA? Call us at 630.393.7201 or outside Chicagoland 800.983.6828 to request a no annual fee Platinum VISA.

Want to transfer additional balances? Feel free to make copies of this form or transfer balances online at www.northstarcu.org.

*Offer available through January 31, 2005. Transfer balance reverts to standard VISA Platinum rate (8.9% APR as of 11/10/2004) on January 31, 2006. Not available on existing NorthStar credit card balances. Not responsible for fees and finance charges incurred by you prior to your balance being transferred to NorthStar Credit Union – please continue to make at least the minimum payments on your other credit cards until we notify you that the balances have been transferred.

Visa Balance Transfer Form

I would like to transfer the amount shown below to my NorthStar Credit Union VISA Platinum.

Member name: _____

Member number: _____

Card issuer: _____

Amount to pay: _____

Account number: _____

Payment address: _____

Signature: _____

I understand I cannot hold NorthStar Credit Union responsible for late payments. This transaction will be processed as a cash advance according to the terms and conditions for the NorthStar credit card agreement.

Tax Planning Remember to IRA, Not IRS

April 15th is quickly approaching. As you prepare your income tax returns, keep in mind that it's not too late to make 2004 Individual Retirement Account contributions. In addition, IRAs are a terrific way to reduce future tax liability.

In addition, contribution limits continue to increase. People under 50 years of age can contribute up to \$3,000 to an IRA in 2004 and up to \$4,000 in 2005. Investors 50 years of age and up can deposit up to \$3,500 in an IRA in 2004 and up to \$4,500 in 2005.

Traditional IRAs

- Tax deductible contributions *[depending on income level]*
- Distributions begin at age 59½ and are mandatory by 70½
- Taxes are paid on earnings when withdrawn from the IRA
- Available to everyone; no income restrictions
- All funds withdrawn *[including principal contributions]* before 59½ are subject to a 10% penalty *[subject to exception]*

Roth IRAs

- Contributions are not tax deductible
- All earnings are 100% tax free
- No Mandatory Distribution Age
- Available to single-filers making up to \$95,000 or married couples making a combined maximum of \$150,000 annually
- Principal contributions can be withdrawn any time without penalty *[subject to some minimal conditions]*

NorthStar Credit Union offers a variety of IRA certificates at attractive rates and terms. We'd be happy to answer any questions that you have about your IRA contributions. Please stop by and see us or call any of our offices.

Time to Draw the Line

Tired of high checking account fees?

Charged for the number of checks you write?

Need the convenience of a MasterCard debit card?

Required to maintain a high minimum balance?

Then draw the line! Open a no-cost NorthStar Credit Union checking account today. Avoid the high bank charges you've come to expect. Experience the credit union difference.

- No fees (except overdraft charges)
- No per check charges or limits
- MasterCard debit/ATM cards available
- Direct deposit and payroll deduction services
- No minimum balance requirement
- Home banking, FREE bill pay, and e-statements

What are you waiting for? Visit the credit union to open your checking account today.