

First FORUM

SUMMER 2016



Get (HE)Locked Into Saving on Your Next Big Purchase

How to know if a HELOC is right for you

Tired of staring at that old, yellowing wallpaper? Have a deck in need of repair? Getting ready to send your child off to college? Whatever the case may be, these ventures aren't always inexpensive and can make cash flow a challenge. A Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC) is a great option for necessities like these.

A HELOC is a loan set up as a line of credit for a maximum draw, rather than for a fixed dollar amount. Since this loan is secured by the equity in your home, the rate is comparatively lower than traditional consumer loans and credit cards. The annual percentage rate on a HELOC is typically based on the prime rate published in *The Wall Street Journal*, and the repayment period on a HELOC is typically longer than a traditional loan.

A HELOC has its benefits, but it isn't for everyone and isn't ideal for all situations. Using the equity in your home puts your home at risk in the event that you are unable to make payments. Additionally, since the rate is variable and influenced by the prime rate, it's subject to changes in the market.

To help you decide if a HELOC is right for you, if you own your own home, answer these questions:

Am I stretched each month to make my mortgage payments?

If the answer is yes, a HELOC might not be a great fit for you at this time. Instead, you may want to look into ways to cut unnecessary expenses or think about refinancing. To ask us about refinancing, call 770-579-1000.

Do I suspect a decrease in income or hefty increase in expenses anytime soon?

While we can't always anticipate a pay deduction or job loss, review your financial forecast and consider possible upcoming expenses that may affect cash flow. If you expect your finances to hold steady and have some wiggle room in your budget, a HELOC could be your low-cost solution.

Do I have a plan for what I'd like to do?

Do a little bit of upfront research to see how much your project may cost or how often you will need to access this line of credit. (A seemingly simple upgrade could be pricier than you thought.)

Can I afford the upfront costs?

Some of the fees associated with a HELOC are similar to ones you may have paid when you took out your first mortgage. Luckily, at MembersFirst, we offer to pay those fees and closings costs, with the exception of the home appraisal, when your first draw is \$5,000 or more.

To talk with us about a Home Equity Line of Credit, visit membersfirstga.com, call (404) 978-0080 or visit an office near you today!

Holiday Closings

Independence Day

Saturday, July 2, 2016
Monday, July 4, 2016

Labor Day

Saturday, September 3, 2016
Monday, September 5, 2016

Columbus Day

Monday, October 10, 2016

CU Succeed Scholarship Drawing:



The CU Succeed Scholarship drawing will be held on Tuesday, August 16. Please turn in all report cards and transcripts to your local branch by Saturday, August 13.



simplifyyourfinances.com



CU cents

FIVE AUTO FINANCE GIMMICKS AND TRICKS TO BEWARE OF

Auto loans – the offers are everywhere. Some are greater than others while others just *seem* like a great deal, but are they really?

“0% for six months!” “No payments for 90 days!” “Cash back, up to \$3,000!” “We’ll give you more for your trade!”

How do you know which great deal is really, well... **a great deal?**

While some could prove to work in your favor, here are a few auto finance gimmicks and deals to be mindful of.

1. Too-good-to-be-true advertised discounts and rates.

Not all dealers are created equal. Some use lower-than-usual rates and price discounts to draw buyers in. The deal could be on one particular vehicle that may or may not still be available. Be sure to get all the details before sitting down in a finance chair.

2. Don't be bullied by special discounts and time limits. If you've been quoted a price with a substantial discount that also comes with a fast-approaching expiration date, don't feel you need to make a hasty decision without time to consider. The expiration date of a promotion should be clear and upfront and shouldn't make you feel rushed into making a decision to buy.

3. Focusing on the payment vs. the purchase price and terms. While it's important to make sure your payment falls within your means, don't get caught up in what you would prefer to pay each month and neglect the details of the purchase price and finance terms. Paying less each month but stretching the terms longer to afford a higher-priced vehicle could prove to cost a lot more in the long run.

4. Substantial offers to pay off your trade. You know what your trade is worth – so does the dealer. If you're offered much more than your trade is typically worth, be sure the overage hasn't been retrofitted into the finance side of the deal. Traditionally, less is offered for your trade than it's worth, so research the value before signing on the dotted line.

5. Offers of 0% vs. cash back. One way or another, a lender is going to profit from the sale of a vehicle. 0% offers usually work for the dealer by increasing the sales price of a vehicle. Cash back deals are usually contingent upon the rate you pay or the price of the vehicle – sometimes both. Give a good look to the fine print of these deals and consider traditional pricing and financing before these.

Get a quote from your credit union before finalizing a loan with a dealer.

Your credit union is here for you with one goal – to help you afford life. It doesn't matter where you find the car you choose; we'll always check the values against the asking price, we'll always give you a fair rate – as low as 1.9% APR* – and we'll ask for a copy of the vehicle title to avoid unnecessary hassle when it comes time to register your vehicle. Our GAP and Warranty programs are very affordable and save you from hidden dealer fees. You can protect your family and yourself in the event of unfortunate circumstances with our Credit Life or Credit Disability Insurance. We share a financial relationship built on trust and value your membership as we work to fit your needs. You'll always see the terms and conditions of our offers up front and receive fair pricing and rates on all the products and services we offer. With that in mind, you can feel comforted knowing an auto loan through MembersFirst is a great decision.

Ready to purchase your next vehicle? Check with us first! Visit membersfirstga.com, give us a call at (404) 978-0080 or stop by your local office to get the process started today.

*APR = Annual Percentage Rate.



Vacay or Staycay?

Need a Vacation Loan?
Borrow up to **\$5,000**
at **8.9% APR***
through July 30, 2016.

Apply Today!
You choose...
MembersFirst Mobile App or
MembersFirstGA.com or
800-798-1073 or
Visit your local branch.

*APR = Annual Percentage Rate

YOUR VISA DEBIT CARD – Trusted Companion or Bullseye in Your Wallet?

Visa® Debit Cards are as important to today's consumers as the cash they carry in their wallets. These nifty little cards give us access to the funds held in checking accounts at trusted financial institutions with the ease of a tap, a swipe or a simple phone prompt. While debit cards are extremely convenient, they pose some real risks if not handled carefully. As long as scammers continue to scam and hackers continue to hack, consumers become targets or victims of fraud on a minute-by-minute basis.

There has been an unbelievable rise in the number of data breaches in the last few years. The latest count from the Identity Theft Resource Center (ITRC) reports that there have been 227 data breaches recorded through April 5, 2016, and that more than 6.2 million records have been exposed since the beginning of the year.* It is important to note that many of these data breaches are not happening at financial institutions. The number of banking/credit/financial breaches for this year totals six; representing 2.6% of all breaches for this year. The majority of the breaches (45.8%) come through business sector accounts which include retailers and service providers. The others come from a combination of the healthcare, government and education sectors.

Scammers and hackers find creative ways to clone debit cards, skim cards for personal information and work within retailer card limits to use your card number to drain your account.

Many times, they use your cloned card to buy gift cards at large retailers. With that being said, think of all the places you use your Visa Debit Card! Each time you swipe, you leave a little bit of information behind. Now, it is not realistic to say, "I will never use my Visa Debit Card," because the truth is, they're convenient and they really are safe when handled properly. With the right precautionary steps, you can minimize the loss if it is detected early.

Here's what we suggest:

1. Monitor your account daily. Use the convenient *and free* online banking or MembersFirst Mobile App to verify your balance and transactions daily. If you see a problem, contact us right away by phone or use the Secure Message feature available in *FlexTeller Online Banking*.

- 2. Ensure that the credit union has your primary contact number.** If you never answer your home phone, you should provide your cell phone number as your primary contact number.
- 3. Ensure that the credit union has your correct mailing address.** We cannot issue cards on incorrect addresses and an incorrect address could prevent your card from working.
- 4. Always answer or respond to the calls that come from the card or fraud department.** You will **NEVER** have to provide your card number, information about your account or details about your transaction. The information regarding the questionable transactions will be provided to you for verification. If you miss a call from the fraud department, you will have a message that will provide a case number and a call back number. You must record the case number; you will need it when you contact the credit union or the fraud department for verification.
- 5. Contact the credit union whenever you plan to travel** outside the state or beyond where you regularly transact business. We will make a note on your account to avoid any interruption in your service.
- 6. If you're traveling, it's always a good idea to take at least three options for payment** – a credit card, your debit card or a reloadable Visa Travel-Money Card. We now have Travel-Money Cards available at the credit union for a minimal charge.
- 7. Never give your account number or card number to an individual that calls you.** If the credit union calls you, we will have all of your account information and will not ask you to provide your account number or card number.

Our mobile app now offers a new option for you to manage your debit card status while on the go! Select 'Debit/Credit Cards' from the menu, choose the appropriate card and your desired action – Activate, Disable or report your card as Lost or Stolen. Just another way to keep your money safe while home or traveling.

As always, if you have a question about a call you received or about a transaction on your account, contact us immediately. If your Visa Debit Card is lost or stolen, call to report it at (800) 472-3272.

Be safe while you travel!

2016 Data Breaches Running 10% Ahead of Last Year - Verizon Communications, Inc. (NYSE:VZ) - 24/7 Wall St. <http://247wallst.com/technology-3/2016/04/07/2016-data-breaches-running-10-ahead-of-last-year/#ixzz49bUlqmn>



Uproot Your Credit Card Balance & Watch Your Savings Grow

▶ ASK ABOUT A **Save As You Pay LOAN**

- Borrow up to \$25,000
- Rates as low as 8.9%
- Save and earn interest while you repay your loan

Talk to a member advisor today.

We're going back to school!

MembersFirst will open a student-run, full-service branch at Hiram High School in Paulding County in August 2016! Plans are already underway, and the students and staff are excited about the opportunity, which will support the efforts of the Work-Based Learning program. We're proud of the progress the students have already made and are excited about future opportunities this new project will afford them.



★ CU Happenings!



1. Congratulations to our WellStar Health System Hospital Week raffle winners! Thank you for all you do!

Windy Hill – Janice Reese – Grilling Basket
 WCO – Chris Shaw – Date Night Basket
 WAB – Matthew Hooper – Grilling Basket
 Paulding – Faye Frey – Grilling Basket
 Cobb – Tammy Maynard – Beach Basket
 Acworth HP – Angela Landrum – Date Night Basket
 Douglas – Joseline Diaz – Grilling Basket
 Kennestone – Roslyn Ellis – Beach Basket
 WDC – Betty Kitchen – Date Night Basket

2. Golf Tournament

If your perception of golf is all game and no fun, think again. Check out this wacky photo from the BLD Golf Classic at The Frog. MembersFirst was proud to be this year's photography sponsor.



3. 2016 Relay for Life

We relay to stop cancer in its tracks. Check out our team at this year's Paulding County Relay for Life®. We raised more than \$4,000 to fund research to help wipe out cancer!

4. High School Budgeting...Breakdown?

Seniors at Savannah High had the opportunity to learn a bit about the importance of taking care of their finances...and show off their dance skills while at it! Ms. Ashley DuBois taught them what it takes to make smart budgeting and credit decisions as they venture into life after high school.

5. We've Got a Winner Here!

Check out Ms. Shante Baker, our raffle prize winner at Candler Hospital, with her cool new beach/pool bag! Ms. Baker will also beat the summer heat with four tickets to Summer Waves on Jekyll Island! Congrats!



Main Office and Call Center

Metro Atlanta

Phone (404) 978-0080

Fax (404) 978-0095

Savannah

Phone (912) 352-2902

Fax (912) 352- 0838

Chatham County

606 East 67th St.
 Savannah, GA 31405

Cobb County

WellStar-Cobb Hospital

3950 Austell Rd.
 Austell, GA 30106

WellStar-Kennestone Hospital

675 Campbell Hill St.
 Marietta, GA 30060

DeKalb County

North DeKalb Mall

2050 Lawrenceville Hwy.
 Suite C-40
 Decatur, GA 30033

DeKalb Medical

2701 North Decatur Rd.
 Decatur, GA 30033

Douglas County

7475 Douglas Blvd.
 Suite 206
 Douglasville, GA 30135

This credit union is federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration.



NCUA

13030-NL-0316

Fulton County

Atlanta Medical –

Main Campus

303 Parkway Dr.
 Atlanta, GA 30312

Sandy Springs

6690 Roswell Rd. NE
 Suite 1100

Sandy Springs, GA 30328

Paulding County

44 Highland Falls Blvd.
 Hiram, GA 30141

Satellite Locations

(Part-Time Hours)

Atlanta Medical Center –
 South Campus

WellStar Admin Building

WellStar Corporate Office

Mailing Address

PO Box 33189
 Decatur, GA 30033

Loan Express

24-Hour Lending Service
 (800) 798-1073

Mortgages

(770) 579-1000

Phone Banking

Metro Atlanta
 (404) 978-0089

Savannah

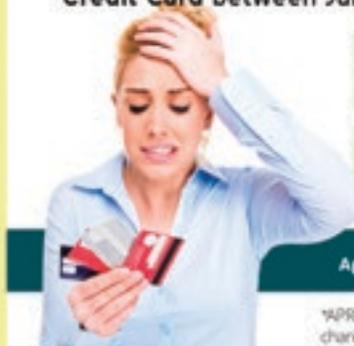
(912) 352-0059

Website

www.membersfirstga.com

Credit cards stacked against you?

Reduce stress! Transfer your high-rate balances to a MembersFirst Visa® Credit Card between July 14 and September 30, 2016 and enjoy...



• Low balance transfer rate of 3.99% APR* for 12 months

• No balance transfer fees

• Visa® ScoreCard® Rewards points on purchases

• After 12 months, non-variable credit card rates as low as 8.99% APR*

Apply today! 404-978-0080 • 912-352-2902 • membersfirstga.com

*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Terms and conditions subject to change. Based on credit approval. See Credit Union for details.

