

Memberlink

AUTUMN 2024

Your Quarterly Guide To Connecting You

FALL SHRED EVENT

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19TH ★ 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

AT THE FOLLOWING WCCU LOCATIONS:

- ★ BARABOO ★
- ★ RICHLAND CENTER (MAIN OFFICE) ★
- ★ VIROQUA ★

New hats and mittens or freewill donations will also be accepted at the WCCU Shred Events. All donations* will be shared with our communities in need.



*See page 4 for more details about the WCCU Hat & Mitten Drive!

FRAUD ALERT: "Check Washing" On The Rise!

Check washing fraud is far from new, but a recent resurgence in the crime might have you rethinking when and how you send checks. **Yes, this is even happening locally, right here in Southwestern Wisconsin.** At WCCU, we urge you to be aware and spread the word.

What Is Check Washing Fraud?

Check washing is one step in a chain of events that criminals use to steal money. The entire check fraud scheme generally works like this:

- Criminals steal checks from the mail.
- They wash the stolen checks. Thieves prepare and wash checks with specific chemicals to remove the payee information and amount, but keep the rest of the check's information and the signature.
- They write new information on the blank check. Once the check is washed and dried, criminals can write in any name and amount they want. They might turn a \$50 check into a \$5,000 check and can make it out to whomever they want.
- They deposit the check and then withdraw the funds. Or they write the check out for other purposes. Either way, they are stealing your money.

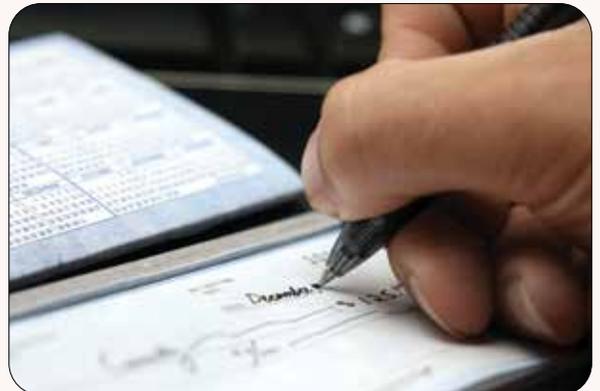
How to Avoid Check Washing Fraud

- Use electronic bill pay and transfers.
- Use a black gel pen. If you are writing a check, gel pens might have ink that's harder for criminals to wash off. Some gel pens, such as Uni-Ball pens with Super Ink, even claim that their ink protects against fraud.
- Mail checks at the post office. If you're mailing a check from your home, don't raise the flag on your mailbox—thieves may be on the lookout for these.
- Retrieve mail from your mailbox daily. You never know when a thief will try to steal your mail, so it's best to frequently check your mailbox.
- Ask for a USPS mail hold when traveling. If you're going to be out

of town, you can request a USPS mail hold, and the USPS will hold your mail for up to 30 days.

- Frequently review your checking account. Keep a close eye on your checking account and look for unusual or unexpected withdrawals.

If you have family and friends that regularly send checks in the mail, please take a moment to share this important information with them.



Watch For These Hazards On The Road To Retirement



Brandi Walton
Investment Professional

On the road to retirement, be on the lookout for hazards that can hamper your progress. Here are five potential risks that can slow you down.

Traveling aimlessly

Embarking on an adventure without a destination can be exciting, but not when it comes to retirement. Before starting any investing journey, the first step is setting a realistic goal. You'll need to consider a number of factors — your desired lifestyle, salary/income, health, future Social Security benefits, any traditional pension benefits you or your spouse may be entitled to, and others.

Examining your personal situation both now and in the future will help you home in on a target.

While some people prefer to establish a lump-sum goal amount — for example, \$1 million or more — others find a large number daunting. Another option is to focus on how much you might need on a monthly basis during retirement. Regardless of the approach taken, be sure to factor in inflation, which can place unexpected curves in your path.

Investing too aggressively...

You may also encounter potholes when trying to target an appropriate rate of return. Retirement investors aiming for the highest possible returns might want to overweight their portfolio in the most aggressive — and risky — investments available. Although it's generally wise to invest at least some of a retirement portfolio in higher-risk investments to help outpace inflation, the proportion and individual investment selections should be determined strategically. Investments seeking to achieve higher returns involve a higher degree of risk. Appropriate decisions will reflect your goal, your investment time horizon, and your general ability to withstand volatility. Proceed with Caution.



...Or too conservatively

On the other hand, if you're afraid of losing any money at all, you might favor the most conservative investments, which strive to protect principal. Yet investing too conservatively can also be risky. If your portfolio does not earn enough, you may fall short of your goal and end up with a far different retirement lifestyle than you originally imagined.

All investing involves risk, including the possible loss of principal, and there is no guarantee that any investment strategy will be successful.

Giving in to temptation

Most people experience an unplanned detour on the road to retirement — the need for a new car, an unexpected home repair, an unforeseen medical expense, or the opportunity to take a long, exotic vacation.

During these times, your retirement portfolio may loom as a potential source of funding. But think twice before tapping these assets, particularly if the money is in a tax-deferred account such as an employer-sponsored plan or IRA. Consider that:

- Any dollars you remove from your portfolio will no longer be working for your future.
- In most cases, you will generally have to pay regular income taxes on amounts that represent tax-deferred investment dollars and earnings.
- If you're under age 59½, you may have to pay an additional penalty of 10% to 25%, depending on the type of retirement plan and other factors (some emergency exceptions apply — check with your plan or IRA administrator).

It's best to carefully consider all other options before using money earmarked for retirement.

Prioritizing college over retirement

Many well-meaning parents may feel that saving for their children's college education should be a higher priority than saving for their own retirement. "We can continue working as long as needed," or "our home will fund our retirement," are common beliefs. However, these can be very risky trains of thought. While no parent wants his or her children to take on a heavy debt burden to pay for education, loans are a common and realistic college-funding option — not so for retirement.

If saving for both college and retirement seems impossible, a financial professional can help you explore a variety of tools and options to assist you in balancing both goals (however, there is no assurance that working with a financial professional will improve investment results).

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Contact WCCU Investment Consultants • (608) 634-7756 • 1333 South Blvd., Baraboo, WI 53913

Or call your local WCCU office and ask to be connected with Brandi, or Brandi's voicemail at extension 1756.
(Calls are forwarded so you may experience a delay or be asked for a name and phone number in the event the call disconnects.)

Fax us at 1-888-509-4597 This is a direct and secure fax line to WCCU Investment Consultants.

Email us at info@wccuinvestmentconsultants.com **Learn more** at www.wccuinvestmentconsultants.com

Additional Offices 501 North Main St., Westby, WI • 1302 North Main St., Viroqua, WI • 2403 Hwy 14 East, Richland Center, WI
820 Viking Drive, Reedsburg, WI • 70 Commerce St., Lake Delton, WI • 138 Northridge Dr., Portage, WI



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Investments are not insured by the FDIC/NCUA and are not deposits or other obligations of, or guaranteed by, any depository institution. Funds are subject to investment risks, including possible loss of principal investment.

This communication is strictly intended for individuals residing in the states of Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. No offers may be made or accepted from any resident outside these states due to various state requirements and registration requirements regarding investment products and services.

A WCCU Card For *Your Lifestyle*

The WCCU Advantage

-  no annual fee
-  great rates
-  awesome rewards
-  serviced locally



Emerald Cash Back (VISA Signature)

11.50% - 18.00% APR*

Ideal for members who qualify for a \$5,000 limit and pay off their card monthly or carry a low balance. This is an extremely competitive card for rewards. APR is slightly higher, but it is designed for members seeking a cash back incentive.

1.5% Cash Back (on purchases only)

Cash Back Expiration: 4 Years

Minimum Credit Line: \$5,000

Cash back is deposited into WCCU Savings or Checking Account, or as payment on CC statement. (\$25 minimum)

Can also be redeemed for merchandise, travel, or gift cards.

\$250,000 of Travel Accident & Baggage Delay Insurance



Ruby Rewards VISA

9.75% - 18.00% APR*

Ideal for members that pay off their card monthly or carry a small balance. They still have a fairly low rate, but can earn rewards, too.

Rewards: 1 point per \$1 spent (on purchases only)

Point Expiration: 3 Years

Points redeemable for merchandise, travel, gift cards or CC statement (Credit \$50 minimum).

\$100,000 of Travel Accident & Baggage Delay Insurance



Platinum VISA / Platinum MasterCard

7.25% - 18.00% APR*

*Ideal for members that consistently carry significant balances or only make the minimum payment. These members may not be as concerned with earning Rewards because the priority is having a low rate. *Secured Cards are only available in this program.*

No Rewards with WCCU Platinum Cards

**Rates are based on credit worthiness and will vary with the market based on the U.S. Prime Rate. No Annual Fee. Cash Advance Fee 2% (minimum \$5). Foreign Transaction Fee up to 1% of the US dollar amount of the foreign transaction. Late Payment fee \$25, Return Payment fee \$25.*



Overdraft Privilege

At times, unexpected expenses can leave you with too little cash in your checking account. Having a check returned due to insufficient funds can be a costly, inconvenient and potentially embarrassing experience.

At WCCU we do not encourage overdrafts. As always, we encourage you to manage your finances responsibly. However, we want to save you from the additional merchant fees and possible damage to your credit history that might result if a check is returned. That is why we provide a discretionary service called "Overdraft Privilege" to eligible accounts in good standing. (For example, we typically do not pay overdrafts if your account has not been positive within the last 35 calendar days, you are not making regular deposits, or you have a past due loan, garnishment or levy).

With Overdraft Privilege transactions may be approved, up to the Overdraft Privilege limit, when there are insufficient available funds in your account. A \$20 fee will be charged per presentment against insufficient available funds and will reduce the amount of Overdraft Privilege that is available to you. Please be aware that Overdraft Privilege is intended for inadvertent or occasional use, such as a balance miscalculation. You are encouraged to use other overdraft protection services WCCU offers, such as an automatic transfer from a savings account, as your first line of defense against overdrafts.

Overdraft Privilege is automatically provided to eligible accounts and there is no charge unless you use the service. If you prefer not to have Overdraft Privilege on your account, please contact any of our WCCU offices and we will remove it.

VERY IMPORTANT:

The above protection will cover only checks, ACH items, in person withdrawals and any recurring debit card transactions. If you wish to extend your Overdraft Privilege to cover ATM and everyday debit card transactions, the regulation requires that you give WCCU your consent by "Opting In". To do this, simply contact any of our WCCU Offices or use the Overdraft Privilege widget to enroll yourself. If you have already given WCCU your consent, there is no need to opt in again. Although you do not ever expect to use it, it will give you peace of mind knowing the Overdraft Privilege is there if you need it.

**Subject to WCCU discretion. An Overdraft fee of \$20 per presentment will be charged for overdrafts. There is a cap of \$100 per day on the total amount of fees we can charge you for overdrawing your account. Payment of your overdraft is discretionary and we reserve the right not to pay. WCCU has the right to require payment to bring the account current immediately after an overdraft.*



The WCCU Call Center is **"Helping You Build A Better Life"** with each call, chat, and email interaction they have with you! We proudly celebrate this team for their dedication to serving our members! Pictured Front row (l to r): Tammy Willis (Call Center Supervisor), Jolene Balto, Judy Farrey, Hannah Hatfield; Back row (l to r): Maddie Ziegler, Amanda Grymala, Julie Clark, Michelle Barton. (Not Pictured: Kathleen Zietlow)

Connecting with Chris News & Updates from President Chris Barnick



I would like to take this opportunity to recognize our Call Center Supervisor and her team of dedicated representatives that are the voices you have come to know and trust.

Each of them plays an integral role in creating great member service by continuing to build and nurture relationships.

In 2022 WCCU had installed an automated phone system that featured the use of AI (Artificial Intelligence called VAL). When I joined the WCCU team in June of 2023, I received feedback from both members and staff that indicated that we needed to make a change and get back to the basics of offering better service.

One of my first initiatives as your new President and CEO was to gather our team and find a solution. Together we looked at our options and felt it was in the best interest of our members and our credit union to have the ability to quickly reach our friendly, local staff.

Our Call Center Representatives were excited to start 2024 by returning to our core values. We appreciate your positive response!

At the inception of the WCCU Call Center in 1999, our goal was to offer convenient and efficient services by phone.

Today, our call center has grown into a robust Contact Center. In addition to over 750 calls per day, our representatives also communicate with you via live chat, by e-mail and through the online banking message center.

They are knowledgeable, resourceful and patient, but most importantly, they are very passionate about serving you.

Thank you for your patience and confidence in WCCU. Whether you do your banking by phone, in-person, mail, or online, please know that we appreciate your business and will continue to strive to enhance the services we provide.

Thank you.

Chris Barnick, WCCU President



"Our knowledgeable representatives are here to listen, troubleshoot, and answer your inquiries or direct your call to the appropriate resource. If we do not have the answer, we are committed to find it for them. We enjoy building lasting relationships with our members."

Tammy Willis
Call Center Supervisor

Christmas Club

Congratulations on saving throughout 2024!

Your accumulated savings and dividends from your Christmas Club account were paid out on October 1st. These funds were directly deposited into your Savings Account.

Your Christmas Club Account will automatically renew for 2025. If you would like to make any changes, please contact us.

Be sure to make arrangements to **pick up your free gift for having a Christmas Club Account.**

If you forgot to save with a Christmas Club Account this year, opening an account is easy and automatic transfers make saving simple, too! Call or chat with us online for more details - **and receive a free gift when you open your Christmas Club Account!**



International Credit Union Day

A Day To Celebrate Credit Unions Around The World



ONE WORLD THROUGH COOPERATIVE FINANCE

At a time in our history when we seem increasingly divided, we hope our credit unions use the 76th anniversary of ICU Day to show how our movement brings people closer together through democratic, member-owned financial institutions that put people over profit.

At WCCU, we pause and recognize this historic day. Please feel free to stop by any of our WCCU offices on Thursday, October 17th to enjoy a cookie and sign up for our prize drawing and be sure to follow us on Facebook too!

Don't miss the hat & mitten drive kick-off at all WCCU locations: Bring new hats & mittens or drop off a monetary donation at any WCCU location from October 17th - December 13th to help keep our communities warm this winter!

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024 INTERNATIONAL CREDIT UNION

(ICU) DAY® celebrates the spirit of the global credit union movement. The day is recognized to reflect upon the credit union movement's history, promote its achievements, recognize hard work and share member experiences. International Credit Union (ICU) Day® has been celebrated on the third Thursday of October since 1948.

REMINDER: WCCU is slowly transitioning from the wccucreditunion.coop to wccu.coop domain for emails and our website. If you are expecting an email, but haven't received it in your inbox, check your spam/junk folders as the new addresses may get pushed to those folders initially. Then, be sure to mark wccu.coop emails as safe addresses!



Important Dates At WCCU

ALL BRANCHES CLOSED THESE DATES*

October 14, 2024 / WCCU Education Day
(Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day)

November 11, 2024 / Veterans Day

November 28, 2024 / Thanksgiving Day

December 24, 2024 / Closing at Noon | Christmas Eve

December 25, 2024 / Christmas Day

December 31, 2024 / Closing at 3PM | New Years Eve

January 1, 2025 / New Year's Day

*Please note, you can access your account online in Online Banking or on the WCCU Online Banking App when our WCCU Branches are closed. Processing times will be impacted when WCCU Branches are closed on Federal Holidays.

Please be sure to plan accordingly for Mobile Check Deposits and Online ACH Transfers you may have.

October 14, 2024 / WCCU Education Day

All WCCU Branches Will Be Closed

Our all staff education day will be spent learning about ways we can better serve our members and communities!

October 17, 2024 / International Credit Union Day

Join us for cookies and prizes as we celebrate the 76th Annual International Credit Union Day. **New hat & mitten drive kick-off at all WCCU locations:** Bring *new* hats & mittens or drop off a monetary donation at any WCCU location from October 17th - December 13th to help keep our communities warm this winter!

October 19, 2024 / WCCU Shred Event

8:30 - 11:30AM / Baraboo • Richland Center Main • Viroqua

- Limit **THREE** large boxes per person for shredding
- **New hats & mittens drive** (monetary donation accepted)

Proudly serving Southwest Wisconsin for over 80 years! Helping you build a better life!



Baraboo
(608) 356.5500

Cashton
(608) 654.7580

Coon Valley
(608) 452.2444

Lake Delton
(608) 678.4000

Portage
608.745.1600

Prairie du Sac
(608) 643.0006

Reedsburg
(608) 768.9228

Richland Center
(608) 647.8835

Viroqua
(608) 637.6200

Westby
(608) 634.3118

WCCU Mobile Branch

MemberLink is published quarterly for our credit union members. To contact us call: 608-634-3118 or write the editor, Kerri Theige - P.O. Box 70, Westby, WI 54667-0070 or katheige@wccu.coop.

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