

for TOWN and COUNTRY and

You



## December 2020 Newsletter

### Season's Gratitudes

In a normal year, I would be looking forward to getting together with family and friends to celebrate the spirit of the holidays, taking in holiday shows, and preparing to welcome visitors from out-of-state. Unfortunately, 2020 has not been a normal year and the holiday season is following suit.

Despite the challenges 2020 has brought, the holiday season is not cancelled but does look and feel a lot different. Instead of attending in-person holiday gatherings and events, we are using technology to bring the holiday spirit to us in our own homes and spaces and celebrating virtually. While this does not have the same feel as in-person get-togethers, it does provide an opportunity to share holiday greetings, see loved ones from away, and keep everyone healthy and safe.

As I reflect on 2020, I am grateful for a wonderful staff who have gone above and beyond to serve our members in a variety of ways this year. The willingness to do “whatever it takes” to help members by deferring thousands of loans, refunding hundreds of thousands of fees, and working with members to help them through these difficult financial challenges has truly been a gift. In addition, the flexibility of members to understand the need to deliver services in different ways has also been a wonderful present. Though you cannot see us through our masks, we are still smiling and filled with gratitude to have the best members.

While it has been a year like no other, I do hope you find ways to unwrap joy this season by connecting, albeit virtually, with loved ones, enjoying the lights and making the best of a different holiday season. The promise of better days lay ahead.

From our family to yours, best wishes for the holidays and a safe and happy New Year!

David Libby  
President and CEO





## Park your auto loan in the right place...with us!

If your auto loan isn't with Town & Country, it's not parked in the right spot. Did you know you can refinance it? Refinancing is fast, easy and will likely save you a lot of money! In 2019, members collectively saved more than \$1.6 million by financing their new or used auto loan with us. By refinancing an existing loan from another financial institution, you may be able to lower your monthly payment, shorten the terms of your loan, and pay it off sooner. Call [\(800\) 649-3495](tel:8006493495), or [apply online](#) to see how you can save.

- Flexible terms to fit your budget
- A wide range of financing options available:
  - Terms up to 75 months
  - Up to 120% financing available
  - Discounted loan rates with Town & Country products
- Easy application process
- Local, Southern Maine decision-making for faster approvals
- Personalized, friendly service from start to finish

Financing or refinancing an auto loan at Town & Country is the right route every time. Safe driving.,



## #TCFCUGivesMore Sets New Record

As part of Giving Tuesday, Town & Country employees supported their favorite local and national non-profits. For the third straight year, the credit union provided a match – up to \$20 to a Maine-based non-profit and up to \$15 for a national non-profit. This year's effort contributed nearly \$1,500 to nearly 30 non-profits in less than 24 hours. "We know our staff have a lot of different causes that are important to them, so we wanted to encourage them to contribute, and to add a match to further support causes they are passionate about. With non-profits really struggling financially as a result of COVID, it was great to see such generosity from our staff," remarked Jon Paradise, Senior VP of Communications, Marketing and Community Outreach at TCFCU.



## Financial Wellness and Emotions

During Town & Country's 2020 Money Conference, personal finance expert Jean Chatzky shared her **7 Moves to be Financially Resilient Now**. According to Jean, building financial resilience means taking the right steps today to set yourself up for tomorrow, and the years to come.

This month's focus is **Money Move #5 – Automate to Manage your Emotions**.

According to Jean, our brains are wired to light up with a feeling of pleasure when we get something we want, like when we buy a pair of shoes we have been eyeing for a while. Unfortunately, thinking about saving for retirement or emergencies does not give us that same feeling of pleasure. That's why it is so hard for many of us to save money.

To get around this, Jean recommends we **automate our savings** wherever possible. She suggests thinking about **Money Rule #11 – If you can't see it and you can't touch it, you won't spend it**. Much like the regular savings to your 401K account at work, setting up automatic transfers to other savings accounts can help you become a regular saver. You can automate regular contributions to Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) or Health Savings Account (HAS) to support long-term savings.

Setting up recurring automatic transfers to an emergency savings account or Christmas Club is a great way to jumpstart your savings. Plus, automating your bill payments as much as possible can save time and help avoid unforeseen late fees. Today, it is easier than ever to automate savings and bill payments thanks to technology available through mobile apps and more.

At Town & Country, we are committed to helping members who may need assistance, and in offering tips and resources promoting financial wellness. For more information, email us at [info@tcfcu.com](mailto:info@tcfcu.com) or call [800.649.3495](tel:800.649.3495) to learn more.

If you want to learn more about Jean's 7 Money Moves, you can watch her presentation at Town & Country's Virtual Money Conference at no charge by clicking [here](#).



## Being Neighborly Makes A Big Impact

Though Town & Country Federal Credit Union's 2020 Better Neighbor Fund reception was a 'virtual' affair for the first time ever, the community spirit among non-profits sharing in \$25,000 awarded by the credit union was very real, indeed. At a special online event, the credit union announced the 2020 grant recipients as determined through a month-long vote during October which resulted in more than 10,000 votes cast through the Town & Country FCU Facebook page and its website.

David Libby, President and CEO of Town & Country FCU, acknowledged the challenges facing non-profits at this time. "Our 2020 Better Neighbor Fund comes at a critical time for organizations that mean so much to our communities. For so many non-profit organizations, the impact of COVID on fundraising and the ability to provide essential services and programs has been significant. Non-profits are such an important part of our community and many are teetering on the brink of survival. From the beginning of the pandemic, we recognized the need to help our communities. We are proud that our 'Local Helping Local' initiative has provided strong support to local restaurants, other local businesses, educators and, of course, non-profits."

In 2010, Town & Country introduced the Better Neighbor Fund to celebrate the ideal of neighbors helping neighbors, a concept that has a long and rich tradition in Maine. The credit union has awarded \$275,000 to 88 charitable initiatives, to date.

The 25 finalists were nominated in September, and during October, the public voted online for the project they felt was most deserving to receive one of the eight grants.

The winners of the 2020 Better Neighbor Fund grants include (all serve Cumberland and/or York Counties):

### **\$5,000 Grant Recipients:**

**Strive Maine (South Portland)** – expand the online program to teach independent living skills to individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism and to provide scholarships to people with financial need.

**The Summer Camp (Bridgton)** – furnish girls between the ages of 6 and 18 living in low-income and foster homes across southern Maine with free "camperships" to experience summer camp in 2021.

**First Lutheran Church Pre-Kindergarten Program (Portland)** – provide tuition support to needy families in the neighborhood so they can send their three and four year-olds to this high quality pre-kindergarten program.

### **\$2,000 Grant Recipients:**

**Frannie Peabody Center (Portland)** – expand the purchase of food for clients living with AIDS/HIV in need of emergency assistance over the coming year.

**Girls on the Run Maine (Westbrook)** – expand access to girls in grades 3-8 to a youth development program through At-Home Kits and scholarships to cover program fees.

**Habitat for Humanity of York County (Kennebunk)** – support Saco's first home built this fall. Volunteer labor, tradespersons, donations of money and materials and the homeowner will build this home.

**Riding to the Top Therapeutic Center (Windham)** – provide "riderships" to needy children ages 3 to 18 with disabilities to access the benefits of therapeutic riding, hippotherapy or equine assisted learning.

**Sanctuary Baking (Harpwell)** – expand fresh food and baked goods donation program for homeless, at-risk elderly and shut-ins through mobile bakery plus launch nutrition and basic cooking program for the underserved.

## Avoid Being ‘Scrooged’ This Holiday Season

### Tips to prevent frauds and scams



With the holiday season, there are a significant increase in attempted scams and fraudulent activity. To help consumers be prepared and avoid being a victim of a scam, Town & Country Federal Credit Union is offering tips and advice.

“Unfortunately, the holiday season typically sees a spike in scams and fraudulent activity. We believe it’s important to make consumers aware of this fact and to offer insight into how to avoid being a victim. If we can prevent one person from falling prey to a scam or fraudulent scheme, we are committed to doing so,” explained Heidi Hawkes, Member Relationship Manager at TCFCU.

Steps consumers should take to prevent scams and fraud:

- Do not engage with the caller;
- Hang up immediately;
- Do not provide money or personal information, including home address;
- Contact your local police department immediately, especially if you have lost money or other valuables, or made arrangements for the pick-up of money or valuables from your own home;
- Contact the family member directly using information you already have to determine if the call is valid;
- If an offer sounds too good to be true, it usually is;
- Do not click on any suspicious emails or links;
- When providing credit card and personal information online, make sure it is a secure website at <https://>; and
- Contact TCFCU if you feel that you have fallen victim to any type of scam such as this. Do not be embarrassed.

Additionally, Town & Country urges consumers to utilize technology and fraud prevention tools, such as real-time text messages regarding suspicious account activity, credit monitoring, and checking your accounts regularly for unusual transactions.



## One Click Can Help TCFCU Support Food Insecurity

Sadly, there are a growing number of Mainers facing food insecurity. These include families and individuals of all ages, as financial challenges have dramatically increased the number of Mainers seeking assistance from food pantries. If you can, please consider donating to help us feed our communities. 100% of all contributions will support hunger organizations in Cumberland and/or York Counties. To make a tax-deductible contribution, [click here](https://campaignforendinghunger.org/tcfcu/).