

# real news



**Altamaha**  
Federal Credit Union

[altamaha.org](http://altamaha.org)

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## Helping Hands

### Our jeans make an impact on our communities!

**This quarter**, we were able to donate a combined \$1,200, from our employee donations for Jeans Fridays, to our Wayne and Long County volunteer fire departments. Thank you to the men and women who give your time to keep us safe in every corner of our two counties. You are there when seconds count, and we are grateful for your service!



### Summer Jobs For Students!

**Are you a recent high school graduate or a current college student looking for a summer position?**

*You may be just what we are looking for. AFCU always needs extra help during the summer months.*

*Give us a call, stop by to see us, or apply online by clicking on the "Careers" link at the top of any [altamaha.org](http://altamaha.org) webpage for one of our seasonal teller positions today!*

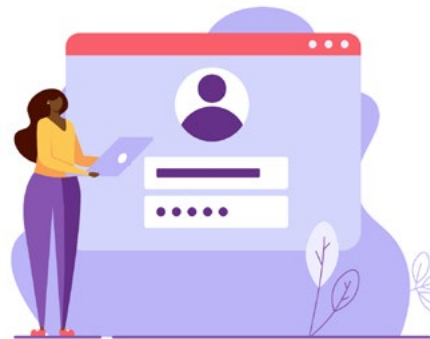


**Call or Visit Us Today!**

### Security Tip: When to Share Account Info

**Did you know?** AFCU staff, nor any of its affiliates, will ever call, email or text you and ask for your account number

or other sensitive information. If you receive a request for such information from someone claiming to be an AFCU employee, don't share it, and be sure to notify AFCU of the attempted phishing along with any details of the call or message you received.



# Cheryl's Corner

**April is Financial Literacy Month and that makes it a great time to talk about our vision and mission.** Our vision is to be a financial education center for our community, and our mission is to deliver products, services and financial literacy outreach to enable our members to make informed and provident financial decisions. This can be seen in many things we do. From providing free of charge financial literacy courses to our area middle schools to our online financial literacy learning playlists to in-house guidance provided by our knowledgeable staff (like our Certified Credit Union Financial Counselors), we are committed to ensuring that all members of our community have the opportunity to increase their financial literacy through our offerings.

A 2018 survey by Discovery Education found that 50% of high school seniors say they wish they had learned personal finance in school, and in 2021, a Milken Institute study found that just 62% of American men and 52% of American women were financially literate. That leaves a considerable number of financially "illiterate" men, women, and children in our nation, and Wayne and Long counties are no different.

The cost of financial illiteracy is high. In fall of 2021, the National Financial Educators Council conducted a survey in which they found that due to lack of financial knowledge, the average American lost approximately \$1,390 in 2021 alone, and collectively poor financial literacy cost Americans a whopping \$352 million last year.

As inflation soars and our world economies become unpredictable, it is more imperative than ever that we take financial literacy seriously. I urge you to take advantage of all of our resources. **Ask your middle schooler's teacher or school to offer our courses to your child, visit [altamaha.org](http://altamaha.org) and visit the "Learn" pages or follow Rocky for important financial tips throughout our website, or have a one-on-one conversation with one of our staff to help navigate your financial journey.**

April may be Financial Literacy Month in the United States, but we think it's easy to see that *at AFCU, every month is financial literacy month. If you are ready to improve your financial literacy, stop by and see the good we can do for you!*

*Cheryl M. Spires, President/CEO*

## Employee Recognition



*Pictured left to right: Ashley Sweet, Jennifer Gravley, and Cindy Arnett*

## Our Loan Team Has Grown!

**Our loan team has grown in both size and knowledge this past quarter.** Loan Advisor Ashley Sweet and Loan Processor Cindy Arnett each earned the Certified Credit Union Financial Counselor (CCUFC) certification in February after completing many hours of study and passing tests on all facets of financial knowledge. This knowledge empowers them to help you make the best decisions about borrowing money. We are proud of the time and dedication both put in to make our loan team stronger. This makes three AFCU loan team members who have earned the certification. Jennifer Gravley earned her certification in July 2019.

Our loan team also grew by the addition of a newly created Loan Advisor position. Tracy Ingram was promoted from teller to this position. She has been with AFCU since July 2021. We are excited to have Tracy on the team, and we are excited to be able to add an additional Loan Advisor to better serve you.

***Congratulations to all of these ladies! We are grateful each of you is on Team AFCU, and we know our members are too!***







## Credit Score Tip: Buy Now, Pay Later May Cost You

**It's easy enough to do.** Maybe you are shopping intentionally for an item online, or maybe you've gone down the rabbit hole of "you might also like this item" pop-ups while on a retail website and found an item you can't live without. Either way, you've made a choice to purchase the item, and now you are given the choice how to pay for the purchase. You can pay with your debit card, your credit card, or you can choose an option to buy now and pay later.

Buy now, pay later options, known as BNPL, are very attractive for more expensive or big-ticket items. They often tout no-interest options for certain time periods and alleviate you having to pay out of pocket right then or even worry about fitting the item on a credit card you would prefer to use for something else. Sounds great, right?

Not so fast. BNPL options are great if used sparingly and when you can afford the item and the payments, but BNPL can lead to impulse buys, which may keep you from taking time to ensure that you can truly afford the item and the payments. When you forego actively managing your debts and add one or two or three items to your debt load on a whim, you may find yourself with an inability to "pay later," ultimately costing you late fees, added interest and late payment marks on your credit report – one of the quickest ways to drive down a credit score. Add to that the impact of adding multiple debts over a short time period or having multiple BNPL items on your credit reflecting at or near your credit limits on those items, and you are just asking for a lower score.

As with any financed item, think about your ability to repay an item you are considering purchasing with a BNPL option. Otherwise, you may pay more later than you want!

## Scam Alert: All Electronic Checks are Not Created Equal

**Most of us have had some experience with an electronic check.** You might have written a check that was converted to an electronic image at a retailer, or your credit union may only return an electronic copy in your monthly statement of a check you wrote to someone. There are a number of other similar, valid examples.

It seems fraudsters have tried to create their own too by emailing check images to people and asking them to deposit the checks to their accounts via the remote deposit feature on their mobile apps. Don't fall victim to this scam!

**Emailed checks are not legitimate and cannot be deposited to your account, via an electronic method or otherwise. If you receive an email with a check image – copy, replica, or picture – asking you to deposit it, delete the email. Don't respond to the email. Don't click on any link, attachment, or picture. And certainly don't comply with any direction to "deposit" the check image.**

While it may sound odd to hear, in today's digital world, ensuring you know the difference between legitimate and fraudulent electronic checks will help keep you safe from scammers.



## Helpful Hint

### Want an automatic loan payment reminder?

You've got it! Text and email alerts can be set up in your home banking or your mobile app.

Look for the "Alerts" option in either platform, and follow the menu options to set up custom reminders, so you never forget a payment again!

### 5 Quick and Easy Things You Can Do with Your AFCU Credit Card at [ezcardinfo.com](http://ezcardinfo.com)



- 1) Activate Your Card
- 2) Review Your Transactions
- 3) Make Your Payment
- 4) Transfer a Balance
- 5) Download Your e-Statement

Need help with an AFCU credit card or [ezcardinfo.com](http://ezcardinfo.com)?  
Call our helpful staff at (912) 427-8924.

## It's time to get working!

Let AFCU help with a low-interest loan for your next lawn mower, storage building or trailer!

Come see Ashley or Tracy at our Jesup location, or call them at (912) 559-6083 to get started.

If your schedule is tight, click on "Apply for a Loan" from any page at [altamaha.org](http://altamaha.org).



***As a reminder, for the safety of all members and staff, firearms are prohibited in all AFCU locations.***

## Hey, Wayne and Long County High School Seniors!

### Don't Miss Your Chance!

The application period for our college scholarships ends

**April 15th!**

Visit [altamaha.org/about-us/scholarships](http://altamaha.org/about-us/scholarships) for official rules and eligibility.



## Holiday Closings

### Memorial Day

Saturday, May 28th and Monday, May 30th

### Juneteenth

Saturday, June 18th and Monday, June 20th

### Independence Day

Saturday, July 2nd and Monday, July 4th

## Community Shred Day

**Friday, April 22nd**

*Bring your documents for shredding to any of our locations!*

Federally insured by NCUA



**Jesup**  
407 South First Street  
(912) 427-8924

**Ludowici**  
442 East Cypress Street  
(912) 545-3257

**Screven**  
217 J.L. Tyre Street  
(912) 579-2767



To access your account online visit [altamaha.org](http://altamaha.org) or from your mobile device, **download our app** from the app store.