

real news



altamaha.org 

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AFCU's Hands Help Many Throughout our Communities

Christmas is an especially hard time for those who have limited resources and who have children. Christmas 2023, AFCU collected toys in all three branches for Wayne and Long County children through the Toys for Tots program. We are happy to report that through the generosity of both our AFCU team members and you, our credit union members, we filled these boxes up multiple times throughout the season. When it comes to sharing with those who have less than us, our members always deliver! Thank you, all, for your donations and for sharing your love during the Christmas season of giving.

AFCU has also been busy ensuring that we help members of our community throughout the year. This quarter, we are proud to have partnered with the Boys & Girls Club of the Altamaha Area, Fair Haven, the Farmer's Market, and the Long County 4-H to ensure that children have safe environments in which to learn outside the classroom, that victims of domestic abuse can find a new life away from their abusers, and that local farmers and food and craft producers can sell their goods without the added expense of a middle man. AFCU is committed to our communities and to ensuring that they remain a great place to live for all! If you have an opportunity for us to serve or assist, please let us know.

Credit Score Tip: Yes, No, or Maybe Not

When thinking about credit scores, most of us know that with a good credit score, we are more likely to be approved for a loan, and with a bad credit score, we are more likely to be denied a loan. Depending on the lender, approval or denial may be based on the credit score itself or it may simply be reflective of the credit habits and history that helped form that credit score.



However, more important than whether your loan application is approved or denied is the rate of interest you pay on the approved loan. Credit scores are all about determining the risk of your potential to repay a loan and to repay it timely. Therefore, most lenders today charge higher rates of interest to those with lower scores. In other words, the lower your credit score, the higher your rate. As your rate goes up, so does your payment amount on the same loan amount. Said another way, the worse your credit score, the more you will pay month over month for the same amount borrowed than someone who has a better credit score.

Ultimately, when faced with a higher payment, many of us will think, "Maybe not," simply because we cannot afford it, meaning that our lower credit score has kept us from obtaining whatever we needed the funds for. And so it behooves you to work towards the highest credit score you can, so that you don't get locked out of credit simply because we can't afford the cost.

Cheryl's Corner

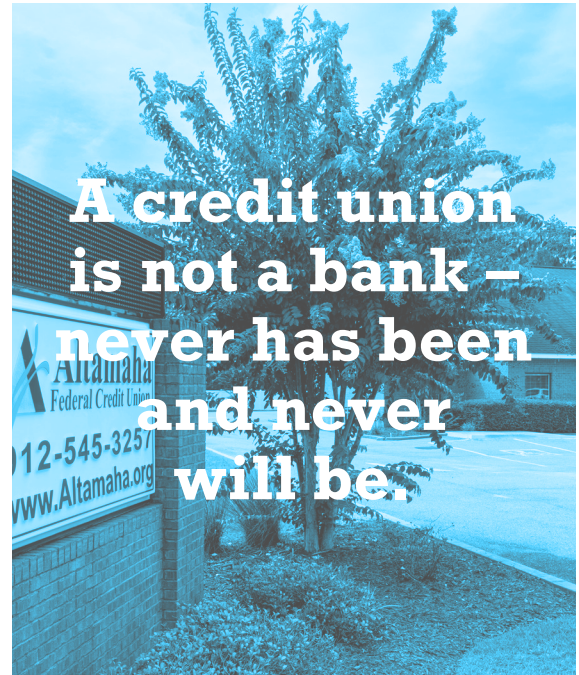
AFCU has seen a lot of progress in the past year. As I was unable to attend this year's Annual Meeting of the Membership, I'd like to take this opportunity to tell you about some of that progress. We continue to implement new products and services to better meet your needs. Joining our debit cards, our credit cards may now be used on Apple Pay, Google Pay, and Samsung Pay. Speaking of debit cards, we now offer both Wayne County High School and Long County High School designs, available exclusively in our Jesup branch, to help support both school systems with special projects and programs. And most importantly with our credit cards, we have saved numerous members thousands of dollars by transferring balances to our low-rate cards. We also rolled out a new small dollar loan program to assist those who may not qualify under normal underwriting criteria, and we continue to loan money as cheaply as possible to help with purchases ranging from cars and trucks to ATV's and UTV's to lawn mowers, storage buildings, and trailers.

Our Kasasa accounts continue to grow in popularity, particularly our Kasasa Cash accounts, which as of this writing, are offering **7% Annual Percentage Yield on the first \$15,000**, and we also are currently offering some attractive certificate specials. It's been a long time since we've seen deposit rates this high!

In addition to this, we are rolling out our first ever call center to provide easier access to more consistent assistance, and we have now added three full-time positions to our Ludowici branch to remain open all day each day there, and we have promoted several AFCU team members as we continue to grow.

I hope you also take the opportunity to read about our community involvement in each newsletter and to follow our Scam Alerts, FinLit articles, and Credit Score Tips, and of course, to take advantage of one-on-one advice from our trusted staff, through our school programs, or online at altamaha.org. It is our mission to deliver products, services, and financial literacy outreach to enable our members to make informed and provident financial decisions, and everything we do is for you. If it's been a while since you visited us, I encourage you to stop by and see the good we can do for YOU!

Cheryl M. Spires
President/CEO



AFCU's Commitment to Our Members

We will:

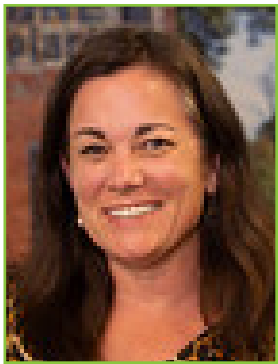
- Provide a clean and welcoming environment.
- Process your requests accurately and efficiently.
- Offer convenient and accessible products and services.
- Build relationships with you and earn your trust.



Moving On Up

Altamaha Federal Credit Union would like to congratulate several employees on their recent promotions.

Autumn Henderson moved from the Jesup branch to the Ludowici branch as a Member Service Representative I (MSR), and Brittany Crawford moved to MSR III from Teller Supervisor at the Jesup location. Heather Ford is moving from the Screven branch, where she was an MSR II, back to the Jesup office as Operations Clerk, where she will be a part of our new call center, and Kaniya Randolph will be stepping up from Teller I to our Jesup Teller Supervisor. Finally, Rachel Moore in our Ludowici office was promoted from Teller II to MSR II there. We are very proud of each of these team members' hard work and their dedication to AFCU. We wish them each continued growth and success as they continue to serve our membership well.



Autumn Henderson



Brittney Crawford



Heather Ford



Kaniya Randolph



Rachel Moore

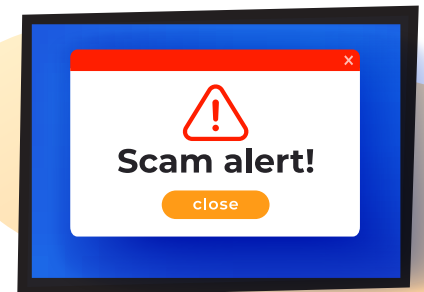
Scam Alert: Pop Goes the Weasel!

Most of us in South Georgia have experienced a weasel or two, given our wide swaths of forested and planted lands, but the one we should watch most closely for isn't in our back yard. He is lurking online, and he may pop up at any time.

These internet weasels use security pop-ups to make it appear that you have been the victim of fraud at an institution with whom you have some financial relationship, like a bank, credit union, or even a retirement account. They then provide a phone number to call or a link to click to ensure that your funds are protected. Unfortunately, these phone numbers and links are ALWAYS a direct link to someone attempting to gain access to your financial information, and you should NEVER call the numbers provided or click these links.

If this happens to you, call your financial institution directly, using a number you know to be legitimate, to verify any potential fraud with them. And if you haven't before, you may want to take added precautions to secure your account, such as adding a password.

Lastly and most importantly, should you call or click before thinking, you should NEVER give these imposters passwords or verification codes to log into your accounts, and you should NEVER move or transfer your money while on these calls or chats. Following these simple steps will help ensure that the only weasels you see stay in your back yard and that your money remains safe!





Helpful Hint



Buying a Car?



Follow these 5 steps to get your best deal:

- Get pre-approved at AFCU for your auto loan.
- Shop your rate and let us know if you find a better deal. Often, we can match rates.
- Have AFCU pull the value of any vehicle you want to buy before signing a buyer's order.
- Have AFCU pull a free Carfax for you to ensure there are no prior issues with the vehicle.
- Protect yourself with low-cost GAP, warranty, and credit insurance sold at AFCU to help cover events that may hinder you in repaying your loan later.

Did You Know?

Our Ludowici branch is now open
all day Monday – Friday
from 9am – 5pm!



WCHS and LCHS Seniors: Don't Miss Out!

The application period for our college
scholarships ends April 11th.

Apply for one of our four \$2,500 college scholarships!

Visit altamaha.org/about-us/scholarships
for official rules and eligibility.

**AFCU staff will NEVER call, email or text you
and ask for your account number
or other sensitive information.**



Holiday Closings

Memorial Day

Saturday, May 25th
and Monday, May 27th

Juneteenth

Wednesday, June 19th

Independence Day

Thursday, July 4th



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

Federally insured by NCUA



To access your account online visit altamaha.org or from your mobile device, **download our app** from the app store.