

Log onto our website at www.towncountrycu.com

happy
st. patrick's
day!

Celebrate by putting a little extra in savings today. You don't need to find a leprechaun's pot of gold to build lasting wealth.



How to Pay Off Debt with the Stack Method

1. Add up all your minimum debt payments
2. Decide how much on top of that amount you can afford to pay each month. This amount is your stash.
3. Identify the loan with the smallest balance.
4. Make minimum payments on everything except that loan.
5. Put everything left in your stash toward the loan you identified.
6. When that loan is paid off, add its minimum payment toward your stash.
7. Repeat the process with the next loan you want to pay off.
8. Your monthly stash will continue to grow as you pay off more loans!

America Saves Week: Making Savings Automatic

Americans have a hard time saving money. According to a report from the Pew Charitable Trusts, the typical household cannot replace even one month of income with liquid savings.

If building an emergency savings fund is one of your goals for 2018, join thousands of others during America Saves Week—February 26 through March 3, 2018—and step up your savings.

America Saves Week is coordinated by America Saves and the American Savings Education Council to promote good savings behavior.

No matter your financial situation or how much you earn, you can save. Even the smallest amounts tucked away regularly will accumulate into a nice savings cushion.

Set a goal. Make a plan. Save automatically.

TCCU Credit Card: Your Best Bet

- Choose the card with nothing to hide.
- Low 9.90% non-variable APR
- No annual fees
- No balance transfer fees
- No cash advance fees
- No penalty fee

Give us a call to enroll you today, 712-755-3881.



102 N. Elm St., Avoca
712-307-6881

AVOCA HOURS: Mon.-Fri. 8:30 am- 4 pm; Sat. 9 am- 12 pm

Watch For
Our Upcoming
**GRAND
OPENING!**

1414 Chatburn Ave., Harlan, IA 51537 • 712-755-3881
102 N. Elm Street, Avoca, IA 51521 • 712-307-6881
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■ *Prep Your House for Sale*

- **Declutter**—Decide what to keep, toss, recycle, or donate. Move boxes out of the main part of the house.
- **Thoroughly clean** every nook, cranny, and corner.
- **Freshen up with paint**—Neutral colors are best.
- **Spruce up entryway**—Replace or paint the front door if necessary. Buy and install a new mailbox and house numbers, if needed.
- **Install** new carpet if yours is worn or outdated.
- **Remove** window treatments unless they are current and good quality.

TIED UP BY DEBT?

Getting out of debt is hard, especially if you're trapped in a tangle of payments every month. We can help consolidate your payments into one easy-to-manage, low-interest loan—**so you can get out of debt faster.**

Do not save what is left after spending, but spend what is left after saving.

—Warren Buffet



**HUGS.
FRESH AIR.
SUNSETS.
WATER FOUNTAINS.
PARKS.
CHECKING.**

Our checking accounts are free, because some things in life you shouldn't have to pay for.

The Benefits of Consolidating Student Loans

The high cost of college tuition causes some students to graduate deeply in debt.

Today there are 44.2 million American graduating with student debt, with an average debt of \$25,550 for public school graduates and \$32,300 for private school graduates. The total amount of student debt is currently at \$1.31 trillion. This reliance on student loans is largely due to college costs that outpace inflation.

College borrowers frequently have several loans held by more than one lender, with varying rates on each loan. This makes figuring out whom to pay—and when and what to pay them—a financial nightmare.

Consolidating many loans into one with a fixed-rate monthly payment often is a wise choice for college graduates because it can decrease overall interest rates and extend the payback period to reduce monthly payments.

Still, potential consolidators should note that the extended payback period could increase your total costs. For this reason, it's important to try to pay off the loan early. As your yearly earnings increase, step up payments to avoid the longer interest payments.

Science of Saving

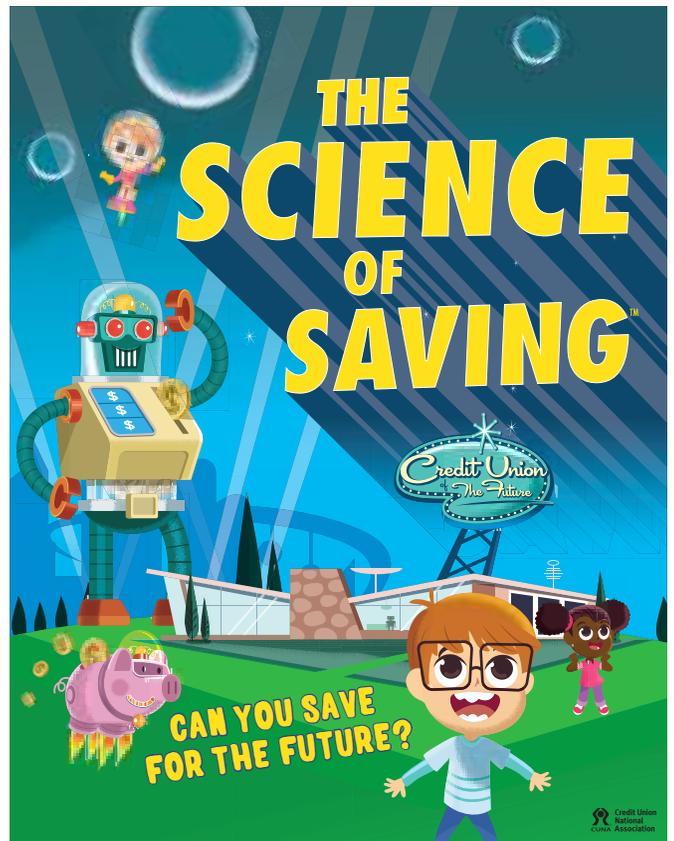
Saving your money isn't always easy, especially when you don't have a lot to spare. After paying all your usual expenses, there may be very little "fun" money at the end of the month. When we do find ourselves with some extra cash, like a tax refund, many of us rush out to buy those shoes or that electronic gadget we've been eying for months instead of putting it into our savings.

Why do we do that? Why do we spend the money we planned on using for our future?

We can blame it on our brains. Behavioral science has shown that humans are hard-wired to act on impulse and that it takes conscious thought to delay gratification. It's also much easier to focus on the present than our future.

To help you save for your future, behavioral science suggests visualizing yourself as you might look when you're older. For instance, if you want to save for retirement, imagine yourself at age 67, living comfortably, maybe travelling the country, or having the time and the means to do something you've always wanted to do. According to a study done in 2014, this technique works. The researchers took photos of 50 college students and digitally altered each person's photo to make them look 70 years old. The participants were instructed to study the photos. Then they were told to imagine receiving \$1,000 and were asked how they'd like to use the money: buy something now for a special person or for extravagant night out, or put that money into a retirement fund. After seeing a photo of themselves at 70 years old, the majority allocated more of the money to their retirement fund than to the other options.

Another way to help you save for your future is by making it a habit. Start with small goals. For instance, commit to putting a certain amount, say \$10, into a savings account every week. If you have direct deposit, you might want to consider setting up an automatic transfer of \$10 into your savings



account every time your paycheck is deposited. Over time, you can gradually increase the amount by a dollar or two.

Teach Your Children How to Save

To help your children get into the savings habit, start by having them cut out pictures of something they'd like to have someday and post the images where they'll see them often. Then help them open a savings account at Town & Country Credit Union. You can open an account with as little as \$25.00. Encourage your child to make regular small deposits each week. Tell them their money will earn interest while it's in their account. If they keep this routine going, they'll quickly see their savings grows.

This April, we're celebrating Youth Month. We encourage you to bring your children into any of our branches to enjoy fun games, win prizes, and learn more about the Science of Saving.



rates as low as **3.24%** APR* Up to 60 months – 2014 and newer, with less than 60K miles



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EXPERTS SAY GUARD AGAINST IDENTITY THEFT BY CHECKING YOUR CREDIT ONCE A YEAR.

Get your **FREE** credit report online at www.annualcreditreport.com or toll free 877-322-8228

Paying for your Child's Higher Education

Most parents assume their children will complete high school and attend a 2- or 4-year college. As higher education costs continue rising, it becomes even more important to plan ahead and determine how your family will pay for it. Ideally, you should start saving as soon as a child is born.

Begin by saving small amounts each month. "Even if it's \$25 or \$50, it's the act of saving consistently that counts," says Joseph Orsolini, president of College Aid Planners Inc., Glen Ellyn, Ill. "You'll be surprised how it builds over time."

Ways to save

Every state offers tax-advantaged 529 plans, which families can use to save for future higher-education costs. Plan managers invest the funds you contribute and, when you withdraw the money to pay for educational expenses, the earnings aren't subject to federal taxes. Many states exempt the funds from state taxes, too, and many have minimum monthly contributions as low as \$15.

Other options for saving are contributing to Roth IRAs (individual retirement accounts) and Coverdell ESAs (education savings accounts).

Roth IRAs can be good for parents concerned that they're not saving enough for retirement, but who also want to help with their kids' education, according to Jean Chatzky, author of "Money Rules." "If you put money in a Roth IRA, when your kids reach college age you can decide if you'll use it for college or retirement."

Another option is to contribute to a Coverdell Education Savings Account (ESA). Contributions to an ESA are not deductible, but amounts deposited in the account grow tax-free until distributed.

If you'd like more more information about Roth IRAs and Coverdell ESAs, talk to one of our representative here at Town & Country Credit Union.

Contact Gervas about our different plans we offer at Town & Country Credit Union.

Finding funds

Seek financial aid if you need additional funding. The first step is completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at the beginning of your child's senior year of high school. You can apply online at fafsa.ed.gov.

Colleges you apply to will put together financial aid packages and send you award letters. They may include federal need-based grants, called Pell grants, or low-cost, need-based federal Perkins loans. They also may include federal Stafford loans, which have slightly higher interest rates. Schools may also offer need- or merit-based grants.

In addition to your savings, look for scholarships and grants. The guidance counselling office at your local high school can provide information about them. If that's not enough, use federal loans, which you and your child don't need to repay until after graduation.

Member Services

Share Savings and Share Draft
Checking Accounts
Free Check Imaging
Holiday Club Accounts
Certificates of Deposit
Kirby Kids Club
Teen Club
Bill Pay
Voice Response
Reloadable Debit Cards

24-Hour ATM
Vehicle Loans
Home Equity Loans
Mortgage Loans
Personal Loans
Business Loans
Lines of Credit
Visa Gift Card
9.9% APR MasterCard
Debit Cards
Direct Deposit
Photocopy Services
Phone Transfers
Payroll Services

On-Line Services
Free Internet Banking
Free Notary
Drive-up Services
Wire Services
Fax Services
Night Depositories
Credit Life and Disability Insurance
Gap Insurance
Draft Images
Auto Insurance
Home Owners Insurance

Term Life Insurance
Accident Insurance
Whole Life Insurance
Variable Annuities
Fixed Annuities
Loan-term Care Insurance
Variable Universal Life Insurance
Mutual Funds
Folio Investing (50 Stocks)
529 College Savings Plan

Harlan Hours:

7:30 A.M. – 5 P.M. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday;
9 A.M. – 5 P.M. Wednesday; 8:30 A.M. – 12 P.M. Saturday

Avoca Hours:

8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday-Friday; Saturday 9 A.M. – 12 P.M.