

ALLIANT<sup>™</sup>  
credit union

# members circle

[www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org)

a newsletter for Alliant Credit Union members

July 2011

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## Five steps to handling a financial windfall

What if the winds of fortune blew a financial windfall into your life? Would you blow it like the Pennsylvania lottery winner who frittered away his \$16.2 million jackpot on items such as a plane (when he didn't even have a pilot's license) so at his life's end he had to rely entirely on his \$475 monthly disability checks to get by? Or would you be smart and use your windfall to ensure your immediate and long-term financial well-being?

Windfalls come in many forms, such as a job bonus, an inheritance, a business deal and, before the housing market tumble, a bonanza profit from selling a house. Of course, the actual dollar amount of your windfall will determine how many goals you can satisfy, but here are some general rules of thumb from financial experts:

**1. Take a timeout,** emotionally and financially, to consider what you really want and need. Perhaps, your first step is to park the money in an interest-bearing savings account until you get your bearings on how best to put the money to use, weighing existing debts, upcoming expenses and your future needs, including retirement. Consider putting off major spending decisions for a few weeks or even up to a year, suggests Susan Bradley, author of "Sudden Money: Managing a Financial Windfall."

**2. Take care of pressing and possible emergencies** – both immediate needs, such as fixing a leaking roof and establishing an emergency savings fund for yourself (if you haven't got one already). Emergency funds are cash savings you set aside to pay for your living expenses if you lose your income. It's in your best interest to have such a fund to last you for three months to a year, experts say.

**3. Pay down debt.** Big debts, particularly high-interest and non tax-deductible ones, can really weigh you down. If this is your situation, consider spending some money to decrease these balances to eliminate the debt faster and save significant money in the long term.

**4. Treat yourself – within reason.** After you've addressed your priorities, celebrate by splurging a little on something you really enjoy or have always wanted.

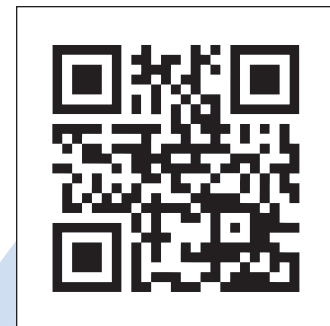
**5. Get expert help.** If your windfall is significant, make sure you don't blow your opportunity for financial security. Consult with financial counselors and legal experts. A financial planner can help you prioritize your goals and help crunch the numbers for you. A certified public accountant can help you tackle the tax issues.

Sources: foxbusiness.com, USA Today, untildetbtouspart.com, wisegeek.com, the simpledollar.com and suddenmoney.com

Want help to make sound financial decisions consistent with your risk tolerance, investment timelines and goals?  
Set up a no-cost, no-obligation financial planning session with

 ALLIANT | RETIREMENT AND INVESTMENT SERVICES

Visit [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org) for details



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## DIVIDEND

August Dividend

DECLARED June 23, 2011

The **August 2011 Savings and IRA Dividend**, declared 06/23/2011, provides a Compounded Annual Percentage Yield of

**1.15% APY**

Dividends are paid on the last day of the month to accountholders who have maintained an average daily balance of \$100 or more. Savings dividend is subject to change monthly.

The **August 2011 High Rate Checking Dividend**, declared 06/23/2011, provides a Compounded Annual Percentage Yield of

**1.10% APY**

Checking dividends are paid on the last day of each month to accountholders who meet the requirements of the account. Checking dividend is subject to change monthly.

# Why credit unions rock, why big banks don't

Ever since the start of the current recession, big banks have produced big headaches – initially by receiving bailouts from the government and now by assessing their customers with a flurry of hefty new fees. In response, financial experts and others have recommended credit unions as a smart alternative.



(And now it's easier than ever to refer your friends and family to Alliant.

See accompanying article about our new Alliant Member Referral Program.)

“The average consumer does much better at a credit union than at a bank,” says Ed Mierzwinski, consumer program director for the U.S. Public Interest Research Group. “Credit unions have lower requirements for waiving fees, offer better deals on car loans and are generally more flexible in responding to customers’ problems.”

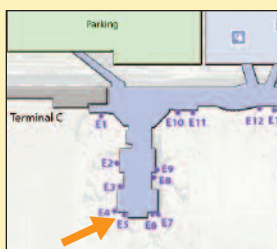


Meanwhile personal finance guru Suze Orman has blasted banks for their fees and loan interest hikes. “Do you feel as though the less in-person contact you have with your bank, the more costly it is becoming to keep your money there? If so, you’re right: Banks are saddling customers with more monthly fees than ever, and this trend is only on the rise.” She notes that an April 2011 National Interest Research Group study shows the average customer nationwide pays “a cool \$190” a year on checking account charges. “Here’s the answer,” she says, “credit unions.”

Sources: creditinfocenter.com, bankrate.com, suzeorman.com, walletpop.com and AARP

## Where to find the new Alliant Service Center in the Houston, TX, airport

On July 11, Alliant moved its Service Center and full-service ATM in the George Bush Intercontinental Airport to Terminal E below gates E4/E5 at the former company store location within Gordon's Galley.



## Now, it's easier than ever to share the Alliant Advantage with your family and friends

Friends don't let family or friends stick with banks that sock them with big fees. Or as financial guru Liz Weston complained: “Too many people stick with a bank that they hate because they don't know there are better options – and because they dread the hassle of switching their money.”

But, now it's easier than ever to help your family and friends make the switch – with our new Alliant Member Referral Program.

All you need to do is go online to <http://www.alliantpromos.org/memberreferral/>.

You can then refer up to five people (at a time) to Alliant by providing your email and theirs. We'll send them a short email message, highlighting how the Alliant Advantage lets people earn more on their savings and pay less on their loans. Your friends and family will also have the opportunity to apply online for Alliant membership.\* It's that easy!



\* Applicant must meet eligibility requirements for Alliant membership. Please visit [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org) for details regarding Alliant membership eligibility.

### office closings

Alliant main offices and Service Centers will be closed in observance of:

**Labor Day**  
– Monday, September 5, 2011

### Convenient 24/7/365 account access

- Online banking at [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org)
- Mobile banking app for iPhone® and Android™
- Member Contact Center at 800-328-1935
- Self Service Telephone at 800-482-5328
- Over 80,000 surcharge-free ATMs nationwide

dial direct: Alliant is there when you need us

**Self Service Telephone (SST)**  
800-482-5328  
24/7 automated account access

**Member Contact Center**  
800-328-1935  
24/7 personal assistance  
TDD/TTY 773-462-2300

**VISA® Debit Card**  
Lost/Stolen: 800-328-1935  
After Hours: 866-861-5411

**VISA® Credit Cards**  
24/7 Member Services/  
Account Info/Lost or Stolen:  
866-444-8529

**VISA® Gift Card**  
Purchase: 800-328-1935  
Support Center: 866-466-2362

**Mortgage Hotline**  
800-365-7003  
Mon–Fri, 6am–7pm CT  
Sat, 8am–noon CT

**Auto/Home Insurance**  
888-380-9287  
Mon–Fri, 6am–10pm CT  
Sat, 6am–8pm CT

**BALANCE™ Financial Fitness**  
888-456-2227  
Mon–Thu, 7am–10pm CT  
Fri, 7am–7pm CT  
Sat, 10am–7pm CT

**Alliant Headquarters**  
11545 W. Touhy Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60666

**Alliant Retirement and Investment Services**  
Financial Advisors are available to serve members in AZ, CA, CO, FL, HI, IL, NJ, NY, TX, VA, WA, WI. In other locations call 800-226-2994.

**Deposits/Payments**  
P.O. Box 60050  
City of Industry, CA 91716-0050

**Credit Card Payments**  
P.O. Box 60051  
City of Industry, CA 91716

**All Other Correspondence and IRA and HSA Deposits**  
P.O. Box 66945, Chicago, IL 60666-0945

**For Alliant Service Center locations, Online Banking, and product and service information, visit our website:**  
[www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org)

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