



**ALLIANT**  
credit union

# connections

December 2004

the newsletter for Alliant<sup>SM</sup> Credit Union members

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for all your improvements...

## your most important tool is YOUR HOME

Your home has become one of your most valuable assets because of the equity—the money value of your property in excess of claims or liens against it—you've built up in it. Together with a home equity line of credit from Alliant, you can make your home work even harder for you: remodel or add on a room, add a deck or patio or pay for your or your kids' education, pay off high-interest debt from other loans or credit cards and more.

Not only can you use a home equity line of credit however you choose, you can use it whenever you want. As you pay back the borrowed funds, they revolve and become available again. Many members set up a line of credit just to have an additional resource for funds when they need it.

### MEASURE FOR MEASURE...

our exceptional product offers significant advantages and lower interest rates than other types of loans and credit cards:

Interest rates as low as  
**PRIME MINUS**

**1/2** %  
...for life!

- Borrow up to 100% of your home's value upon qualification
- Rate is locked in for 1 year

- No closing costs; no application, appraisal or annual fees
- Quick same day approval process
- Convenient automatic payment options available
- Potential tax savings; the interest may be tax deductible

### 3 EASY WAYS TO ACCESS YOUR LINE

- NEW! Transfer funds to your Alliant savings or checking account through SkyBranch® at [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org)
- Call the TeleCenter
- Visit a Service Center

**Contact Alliant to size up a home equity line of credit for yourself.**

Home equity products are available in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, New Mexico, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington. Applicable interest rate varies depending on your credit qualifications and loan-to-value ratio. Your qualifying APR for a Home Equity Credit Line is a variable rate and is adjusted annually on the anniversary date of your first payment of each subsequent year. Your qualifying rate is based on the highest Prime Rate published in The Wall Street Journal 30 days prior to your anniversary date plus a margin. The APR range is from 3.50% to 16.0%. The minimum initial advance is \$10,000; thereafter the minimum advance is \$1,000. No closing costs based on loans up to \$250,000 and meeting Alliant credit criteria. A fee of \$1,000 is applied to Home Equity Loans and Lines of Credit more than \$250,000. Rates and closing costs are subject to credit qualifications. Costs to satisfy certain prior liens may be assessed. Property insurance is required; flood insurance may be required. Subject to credit approval which includes verification of application information and receipt of collateral documents. If the state and/or county in which the collateral is located in charges additional fees and taxes, the borrower will be responsible for payment. Consult your financial advisor about the potential tax savings. We may not extend credit to you if you do not meet Alliant credit criteria. Refinancing is available, certain restrictions apply. A \$200 termination fee may be applied to a Home Equity Credit Line cancelled by the member within one year of origination. Rates, terms and conditions subject to change. Sample Repayment: A 15-year Home Equity Line of Credit at a rate of 4.50% equals 180 monthly payments of \$7.66 per \$1,000 for the first year.

\* Equity is the money value of a property in excess of claims or liens against it.

### DIVIDEND RATE INCREASE!

fourth quarter (nov & dec) dividends

#### DECLARED DECEMBER 16, 2004

Fourth Quarter 2004 Savings and IRA Dividend provides an Annual Dividend Rate of 2.75% — Compounded Annual Percentage Yield of 2.78% APY to members who have maintained an average daily balance of \$100 or more.

The Monthly Checking Dividend provides an Annual Dividend Rate of 0.25% APR — Compounded Annual Percentage Yield of 0.25% APY who have maintained an average daily balance of \$1,000 or more.

Dividends payable to Shareholders on record as of December 31, 2004.

## Committed to Meeting Your Expectations



David W. Mooney  
President/CEO

As you're most likely aware, Alliant recently upgraded our computer systems, including our Self Service Telephone (SST), SkyBranch® online banking and other systems. Following the conversion, a number of members experienced service problems, including longer wait times to speak with Member Services Representatives, confusion and difficulty using SST and delays receiving November account statements.

*I want to apologize for any inconvenience and personally thank you for your understanding during this transition. We are diligently working to restore service levels to what our members expect and deserve.*

Since this upgrade involved virtually every system, application and operation in the credit union, we placed priority on making sure transactions would process and post, accounts balanced and that information would be available and accurate. From this perspective, our system upgrade was a success. Here is what we are doing to address the issues that you may have encountered:

- To handle higher call volumes, we've added Member Services Representatives in Alliant's TeleCenter, particularly during peak volume periods. We expect the amount of phone "traffic" to gradually return to pre-conversion levels (they've run sometimes 24% higher than normal), and our representatives to become experts with the new system.
- We are making changes to the SST menu and navigation to ease and speed access to the most frequently requested information. This necessarily involves some trade-offs with functionality, but members have made it clear that speed and simplicity are paramount.
- We also continue to review and refine our SkyBranch online banking service to increase its functionality and ease-of-use.

We know that clear information is important to our members, so throughout 2005 we will continue to identify opportunities to educate, communicate and promote our automated services. Best of all, the biggest benefit of Alliant's system enhancement is that it is built for flexibility and growth so we can meet your expectations of fast, reliable access, as well as successfully anticipate your future needs.

And that will make for a Happy New Year...and many more to come.

David W. Mooney  
President/CEO

### Alliant Board of Directors

Tom Fraser  
Chairman

John Samolis  
Vice Chairman

David W. Mooney  
President/Treasurer

Patricia Mash  
Secretary

Bill Byrne  
Lynn Hughitt  
Amos Kazzaz  
Marc Krohn

Richard Poulton  
Scott Praven  
Lyle U'ren



#### Notice of Annual Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Member's Annual Meeting of Alliant Credit Union will be held at Alliant Headquarters, 11545 W. Touhy Avenue, Chicago, Illinois on Thursday, the 17th day of February 2005, at 10:00am for the purpose of electing Directors of said credit union and transacting such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

Patricia Mash, Secretary  
Alliant Board of Directors



point-by-point

## New Platinum Rewards VISA®... better than the rest

Alliant recently introduced an additional credit card option to our family of VISA credit cards. In response to member requests, Alliant Platinum Rewards VISA cardholders earn 1 bonus point for every net dollar spent with the card (excludes cash advances and balance transfers). But many banks and financial institutions offer travel options, airline mileage or other rewards with their credit cards...what makes Alliant's better?

#### More mileage out of Platinum Rewards

- Bonus points can be redeemed for travel on most major airlines (not just one) with NO blackout dates, as is often the case with other credit card rewards programs
- No cap on bonus points

#### ...and get MORE than mileage

- Bonus points can be redeemed towards getaways at Hyatt® or Marriott Hotels® nationwide, an Alaskan cruise, vacations to Vegas or Vail, car rental upgrades and other travel rewards, not just airline tickets

- If travel is not your priority, you can redeem your bonus points for brand name merchandise, (cameras, TVs, grills) a flat screen TV, a day at a spa, sports equipment and more

#### No annual fee

- Most reward/point cards have an annual fee
- Compare to mileage cards with fees up to \$135 (and higher APRs)

**Apply for an Alliant Platinum Rewards VISA online at [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org), call the TeleCenter or visit your local Alliant Service Center.** Once your Platinum Rewards VISA arrives, you can start browsing the travel and merchandise rewards – and find out what your bonus point level is immediately at any time – at [www.scorecardrewards.com](http://www.scorecardrewards.com). Entering your new VISA number will allow access. You will also receive an updated bonus point level every month with your VISA statement. If you don't have Internet access, a paper catalog will accompany your new VISA card and you will receive 6 statement inserts throughout the year keeping you up-to-date on exciting merchandise and travel rewards available.

#### WANT TO SEE POINT LEVELS FOR TRAVEL OR WHAT MERCHANDISE IS AVAILABLE?

Go to [www.scorecardrewards.com](http://www.scorecardrewards.com) and enter the following Demo Code: 4955-5512-8999-9996. ScoreCard is the travel and merchandise credit card rewards program that Alliant has selected to provide Alliant members with the best options and biggest variety of travel and merchandise rewards.





#### Reminder to Stay Alert!

Alliant will never contact you to ask you to provide:

- your account information
- your credit card information
- login information, passwords or PINs

The only time you should provide this information is if you initiate the call.

See our special insert "Protect Yourself in '05" to familiarize yourself with other frauds and scams.

latest update from Alliant's Fraud Dept.

## Identity Theft – Statistics, Methods and Preventions

A Federal Trade Commission (FTC) survey revealed that from spring 2002 to spring 2003, 3.25 million Americans discovered their personal information had been used to open fraudulent credit card accounts, take out new loans and perpetrate other misuse of information. Another 10 million Americans reported their personal information was used to open checking, savings and telephone accounts.

Identity theft is a relatively easy crime to commit. The most common methods for thieves to obtain your personal information are vehicle break-ins, purse and wallet thefts, mail theft and "dumpster diving." (But note, ID theft isn't just committed by con artists, it is routinely committed by "trustworthy" friends or relatives, disgruntled employees and ex-spouses.) One ID thief was nabbed with over 250 hotel registration cards that had been stolen from a hotel dumpster. Each card contained the name, home address, driver's license number and telephone number of a victim. With this information, a thief could go online to various database web sites and obtain the rest of the information needed to open fraudulent accounts or perform criminal acts.

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Unfortunately, identity theft victims usually only discover they actually are victims when a bill for items not ordered arrives or a credit card company or lending institution calls. **Here are some ways to minimize your risk – half of all i.d. theft is discovered by using these methods:**

- Review all of your bank and credit card statements as they arrive each month
  - If a statement or bill does not arrive when you expect it, immediately contact the bank or company
  - Shred all mail, including junk mail and unwanted credit card applications
  - Do not place outgoing mail into your mailbox, take it to a post office or a postal drop box
  - Check your credit bureau report at least once a year
- 

If you do discover you have been a victim of this crime, **file a police report** and **contact the Federal Trade Commission ID Theft hotline: 877-IDTHEFT (438-4338)**. The three credit bureaus will be notified by the FTC and will send you copies of your credit report for your review and Fraud/Forgery Affidavits for you to fill out (request them if they do not offer them and retain copies for your records). And, rest assured, the Fraud Department at Alliant<sup>SM</sup> Credit Union is constantly keeping our fraud prevention methods up-to-date to stay ahead of would-be thieves.



**For Valentine's Day or any occasion**

Alliant members receive **15% OFF all flowers and gifts at 1-800-flowers.com**

Use the code ALLIANT when ordering online at [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org) or by phone at 800-356-9377.

## FACTS ABOUT THE NEW

# FACT Act



The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACT Act), a new law for 2005, improves the quality of credit information, gives you greater access to your credit reports and credit scores – and increases your ability to correct inaccuracies – and further protects consumers when their financial information has been stolen. Here’s what you should know about your rights under this new legislation.

### The FACT Act:

- Requires credit bureaus to provide a free credit report annually to consumers who request a copy – or if you report a fraud or theft – and provide credit score information to consumers “for a reasonable fee” as set by the Federal Trade Commission.
- Requires financial institutions to notify you before or within 30 days of reporting negative information about you to credit bureaus regarding an account, extension of credit or transaction.
- Requires mortgage lenders that use credit scores to provide applicants with their credit score information.
- Limits the use of medical information in determining a consumer’s eligibility for credit and restricts the sharing of medical information with affiliated companies under certain circumstances.
- Deters identity theft by requiring merchants to leave all but the last five digits of a credit card number off store receipts (so that slips of paper that many people throw away do not contain full credit card numbers).
- Sets up a nationwide fraud alert system, so consumers will only have to make one call to notify all credit card companies and all three major credit bureaus of fraudulent activity (instead of calling each individually as used to be required).
- Ensures credit reporting agencies receiving such fraud alerts will follow procedures that make sure future requests are the true consumer, not a thief posing as the consumer.



from virtual showroom to vroom

## The Web Puts Car Buyers in the Driver's Seat

According to J.D. Power and Associates, 80 percent of auto shoppers now use the Internet as a shopping tool. Forrester Research lends further support to this trend, citing that five percent of all Internet searches are related to research for a car purchase. Alliant's AutoCenter, at [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org), provides members with all the information they need to shop and make informed decisions.

- Enjoy full access to CyberAutoNetwork's nationwide network of new cars, as well as Enterprise's national inventory of thousands of quality pre-driven vehicles. Members can view a detailed review of the vehicle, including photos, vehicle features, interior and exterior colors, stock numbers, and VIN numbers.
- After choosing a vehicle, members can express interest in a car through an electronic or phone request, either of which will ensure immediate contact by the vehicle's sales representative.
- Once a member locates a vehicle, they can use the AutoCenter to calculate payments and apply for Alliant financing.

### service center locations

**Chicago**  
Alliant Headquarters<sup>1</sup>  
O'Hare Int'l Airport<sup>1</sup>  
United World HQ<sup>2</sup>

**Denver**  
International Airport<sup>2</sup>  
Quebec Square<sup>1</sup>  
7505 E., 35th Ave,  
Ste. 385

**Honolulu**  
International Airport<sup>1</sup>

**Los Angeles**  
International Airport<sup>2</sup>  
Old Freight Building<sup>1</sup>  
5970 Avion Drive

**New York**  
JFK International  
Airport<sup>1</sup>

**Oakland**  
Air Park Plaza<sup>1</sup>  
433 Hegenberger Rd.  
Suite 108

**San Francisco**  
International Airport<sup>2</sup>  
United Maintenance  
Operations Center<sup>1</sup>

**Seattle - Tacoma**  
International Airport<sup>1</sup>

**Sterling, VA**  
United Reservations<sup>1</sup>  
Center  
22800 Davis Drive

**Washington D.C.**  
Midfield Terminal,  
Dulles Int'l Airport<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Public Access    <sup>2</sup> Airport Passenger Access  
<sup>3</sup> Restricted Access-United Airlines employees only

### dial direct: Alliant is there when you need us

**Self Service Telephone (SST)**  
773-462-2100, 800-482-5328  
24-hour account access

**Alliant TeleCenter**  
800-328-1935  
Mon-Fri, 7am-7pm Central  
tdd/tty 773-462-2300

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

**VISA® Credit Cards**  
Account info: 800-328-1935, x2302  
Mon-Fri, 7am-5pm Central  
After Hours: 800-299-9842  
Lost/Stolen: 800-325-3678

**Mortgage Hotline**  
800-365-7003  
Mon-Th, 7:30am-7pm Central  
Fri, 7:30am-5pm Central

**BALANCE Financial Fitness**  
888-456-2227  
Mon-Th, 5am-8pm Pacific  
Fri, 5am-5pm Pacific  
Sat, 8am-5pm Pacific

**Auto/Home Insurance**  
888-380-9287  
Mon-Fri, 7am-10pm Central  
Sat, 7am-5:30pm Central

**Alliant Web Site**  
[www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org)

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

**Deposits/Payments**  
P.O. Box 2387  
Des Plaines, IL 60017-2387

**All Other Correspondence**  
P.O. Box 66945  
Chicago, IL 60666-0945

### office closings

Alliant will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day –**  
Monday, January 17

**President's Day –** Monday, February 21

**Good Friday –** Friday, March 25

For your convenience, SkyBranch®, SST and ATMs will be available.



11545 W. Touhy Avenue Chicago, IL 60666  
[www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org)



NEW113-R12/04

### mortgage loan rates

AS OF DECEMBER 23, 2004				
Type	Interest Rate	APR*	Points	
<b>First Mortgages</b>				
1/1 ARM	3.500%	5.360%	0	
3/1 ARM	3.750%	5.264%	0	
5/1 ARM	4.500%	5.280%	0	
7/1 ARM	4.875%	5.310%	0	
10/1 ARM	5.125%	5.344%	0	
15-YR. FIXED	4.875%	4.976%	0	
30-YR. FIXED	5.500%	5.563%	0	
<b>Second/Vacation Homes</b>				
1/1 ARM	3.750%	5.612%	0	
3/1 ARM	4.000%	5.516%	0	
5/1 ARM	4.750%	5.532%	0	
7/1 ARM	5.125%	5.562%	0	
10/1 ARM	5.375%	5.596%	0	

**Home Equity Line of Credit** As low as 3.50% APR

### dividend rates

FOURTH QUARTER		
	Current Annual Dividend Rate	Effective Annual Percentage Yield (APY)
<b>Share Savings</b>	2.75%	2.78%
<b>IRA</b>	2.75%	2.78%
Traditional, Roth and Coverdell Education Savings Account		
<b>Checking</b>	0.25%	0.25%



Current checking dividend is subject to change monthly.

For current consumer loan rates contact Alliant. Rates, terms and conditions subject to change. Loan approval, APR and downpayment required based on creditworthiness, collateral, payment method and ability to repay. APR=Annual Percentage Rate.

First Mortgages available in all 50 states. Rate 0.25% higher for Jumbo Loans (\$359,650 and more). ARM=Adjustable Rate Mortgage.

\*The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) assumes a 20% downpayment on a loan amount of \$250,000 with a 30-year term. The results above assume an origination fee of \$950 plus \$180 in additional prepaid finance charges plus 15 days of prepaid interest.