



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE



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SERVING MEMBERS SINCE 1935

### ***On To 2024***

With another year passed, we thank our membership for supporting Rails West as their primary financial institution and lending center. We are excited for 2024 and the opportunity to provide you with the wonderful service you've come to expect. Our team is dedicated to listening to your needs and providing credit union solutions for your everyday needs.

### ***Lobby Experience***

Recently we upgraded the branches to provide you with an even better experience when you visit our lobbies. Dynamic flat screens have been added to help you stay up with current events, and more importantly, an opportunity to showcase products and services aimed at your convenience.

### ***Loan Rates Got You Down?***

A big topic of concern over the last 24 months has been the elevated interest rates in the marketplace when one is looking for finance options. Although rates are elevated, Rails West has maintained lower rates than our competitors to help facilitate your lending needs. Our lending team is happy to assist you with any questions you may have. Feel free to call or visit us in person. We would love to see you.

### ***Here To Serve The Community***

As we navigate the 2024 calendar year, we would like to extend our reach deeper into the community. If you or your business have a community event scheduled for 2024, we would love to try and partner up. Over the course of 2023, we were able to partner with multiple student-athletes, unions, and Pocatello/Chubbuck community events. Below is a list of some of the recipients we are proud to have supported for 2023.

- Shoshone Bannock Festival
- Highland Cross Country
- Pocatello Thunder
- Idaho Schold Administrators Association (Student Council)
- Team Sublime Wrestling Club
- D.A.R.E. Program
- Pocatello American Legion Baseball Post 4
- Parades: Chubbuck Days Parade, Homecoming Parade
- SMART TD Local 265
- 4-H Bannock County (Member Sponsorships)

### ***Refer A Friend, Become A Member***

Do you have a friend or family member who could benefit from a full-service Credit union? Refer them to Rails West FCU to become a member. Share why Rails West is the Best since 1935. We are eager to support the goals and ambitions of our current and future members. Come see why we are still the best-kept secret in the banking industry for over 88 Years.

Paul Contreras, CEO

Rails West FCU



January 1 <sup>st</sup>	New Year's Day	Closed
January 15th	MLK Jr. Day	Closed
February 19th	Presidents' Day	Closed

## New Wheels For The New Year?

If the thought of making it through another winter with the same old vehicle (wondering each time if it will start) is just too much to bear, maybe it's time to shop for a new car, truck, or sport utility vehicle with a loan from your credit union.



The end of the year can be a great time to shop. Dealers are always looking to trim their year-end inventory for tax purposes. With dealer and manufacturer incentives, it's not unusual to snag a vehicle at or below dealer cost.

If you're thinking of a vehicle, the first place to stop is your credit union. Let us help assess your situation. We can help narrow the choices, based on your needs. Then, let us pre-approve you for a loan. We have long maintained that you get the best overall deal by buying your vehicle from the dealer and buying your loan at the credit union. Then, with your pre-approved loan in hand, you can shop at the dealer and bargain from a position of authority. Tell them to apply any dealer and/or manufacturer incentives directly to the purchase price.

If it looks like the old set of wheels just isn't going to make it through another winter, or you just like the idea of new wheels for the new year, stop by or call your credit union today and let us get you in the right set of wheels for the right price

## How To Deter Identity Theft

Here are a few tips to help you guard against identity theft:

1. Always shred paperwork and financial documents with personal information instead of just tossing in the trash.
2. Don't carry your Social Security card in your wallet.
3. Don't write or have your Social Security number printed on your check.
4. Provide your Social Security number only if absolutely necessary and request to use another identifier.
5. Don't provide personal or credit card information on the phone, over the Internet, and through the mail unless you know who you are dealing with.
6. Do not click on links sent in unsolicited e-mails or provide personal information in response to unsolicited e-mails from "your credit union" or other "financial institution."
7. Never use an obvious password, such as your mother's maiden name, your birth date, or the last four digits of your Social Security number.
8. Always keep your personal information in a secure place at home.



Balloting for the Board of Directors will be held February 28<sup>th</sup> at the Clark St. Branch from 9:00am-1:00pm and on March 1<sup>st</sup> at the Chubbuck Branch from 9:00am-1:00pm. Ballots will also be accepted at the annual meeting on Wednesday March 6, 2024 at 5:30pm at the Chubbuck Branch. You must be a member of Rails West FCU and be 18 years or older to vote.

The following individuals are running for two positions on the Board of Directors:

- Jill Watkins
- RaNae Palmer

## CU at the Annual Meeting

Join your fellow members at the credit union's 89<sup>th</sup> annual meeting. It's your chance to learn the results of the board of directors election, review our progress, and find out what's on tap for the coming year. Come visit with the staff and board members to provide feedback on your experiences with the credit union, catch up on the news with other members, and enjoy refreshments, too. Attending the annual meeting is one of the benefits of belonging to a credit union. At other financial institutions, attendance at the annual meeting is limited to stockholders. As a member/owner of the credit union, you're invited to participate in its governance. It's one more way the credit union difference shines through. We look forward to seeing you on March 6<sup>th</sup> 2024 at 5:30pm at the Chubbuck Branch.

## Signature Loan Can Bridge Money Gap

It can happen to anyone. The car needs a major repair. A death in the family means an expensive airplane ticket. The furnace goes out on the coldest night of the year. Whatever the emergency, it may result in having a little too much month at the end of your money. A Signature Loan can help bridge the gap. It is a personal loan and is best used to meet short-term unanticipated expenses. Because there's no collateral, the interest rate is somewhat higher than say, a vehicle loan. But chances are a Signature Loan will cost less than a cash advance on your credit card. So if you are caught short, see the credit union about a Signature Loan. It's quick cash to see you through an unexpected expense.



# Making Resolutions

If the upcoming New Year finds you searching for some good resolutions, try some of these:

1. Spend more time with family and friends.
2. Help others - do volunteer work.
3. Enjoy life more. By doing this, you will be a happier and healthier you!
4. Exercise regularly. Exercise keeps you healthy and makes you look and feel better.
5. Make this the year you slim down and keep the weight off. Losing weight can make a difference in your health.
6. Write your will - especially if you have young children.
7. Get out of debt. Get a handle on your finances.
8. Check your credit rating and score. It's best to learn about any problems with your credit record before you apply for credit. By doing this, you may have time to correct them.

## IRAs: Still A Smart Way To Save



For many, the idea of retiring may seem so far away, it seems foolish to even spend time thinking about it or saving for it. But whether you are just starting your career or are working longer than you had planned to because you don't think you can afford to retire, saving for retirement is still a key element in your financial plan. It's never too early and it's never too late to save for retirement.

By tucking away funds in a traditional IRA, you may gain tax advantages. Contributions may be fully or partially tax deductible, depending on your circumstances, and usually, amounts in your traditional IRA (including earnings and gains) are not taxed until distributed. You must start taking money out once you reach 70 1/2. With a Roth IRA, you can't deduct your contributions, but if you satisfy the requirements, qualified distributions are tax-free and you can continue making contributions even after you are 70 1/2. You can leave funds in your Roth IRA as long as you live.

Refer to IRS Publication 590, available online at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov), for complete details on contribution limits, tax benefits, and distribution requirements. Then, stop by the credit union to open or contribute to your IRA today.

## Scroll On Over For A Loan

If you need a loan, we're as close as your computer. Just visit our Web site to apply for a loan. It's easy to apply online, any time, day or night.

First, from the online loan section of our Web site, verify that you are in the right place by looking for "https" in the address line of your browser. Then, just answer a few simple questions and with just a few mouse clicks and keystrokes, we'll advise you of the status of your request. When you apply for a loan online, you can do it on your schedule, not the credit union's. That means whether you are ready to apply for a loan on Sunday afternoon at 4 p.m. or Friday night at midnight, that's when you can do it. So scroll on over. Your credit union is ready when you are.



**Clark St. Branch**

751 E Clark St.  
Pocatello ID 83201  
Ph: 208-232-5746  
Fx: 208-232-2785

In-State Toll Free: 1-800-233-1352  
Out-of-State Toll Free: 1-800-854-9321

Monday thru Friday:  
9:00am to 5:00pm Lobby  
9:00am to 5:30pm Drive Up

**Chubbuck Branch**

4708 N Yellowstone Ave  
Chubbuck ID 83202  
Ph: 208-232-5746  
Fx: 208-234-8610 (Loans)  
208-234-8640 (Mgt)  
208-237-0053 (Teller)

Monday thru Thursday:  
9:00am-5:00pm Lobby  
9:00am-5:30pm Drive Thru

