



POINTS of INTEREST

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

So the economic boom continues, the Dow Jones Industrial Average is near 27,000, unemployment is at record lows and consumer confidence is near all-time highs. What does the Federal Reserve do? Of course...they lower interest rates.

When this occurs, in combination with record low US Treasury rates, interest rates as a whole start to drop. It appears that this is what we are in for over the next couple of years. What does this mean to you? It means that borrowers will be happy and savers...well, not so much. Loan rates have already begun to drop, evidenced by the recent drop in 15-year and 30-year mortgage rates. Savings rates have begun to drop as well, as certificate of deposit rates are impacted by the market.

What do we suggest? Stick with the fundamentals. The prudent investor will borrow money when the return on his or her investment occurs in a reasonable amount of time. They will also continue to save through every economic cycle. Eventually, you're paying for things with cash and interest rates don't matter that much anymore.

However, until you get to that point, come talk with one of our lenders and see just how low rates are these days. If you are a regular saver, continue to make deposits into that savings account, IRA, or CD and ask about our InterestPlus Checking. You may be surprised what you can earn.

As always, thank you for your business.

Steve

FEATURED PRODUCT: CHRISTMAS CLUB

One great way to manage your holiday budget is with a Christmas Club savings account. You can add money to the account all year long with automatic deposits or any time you have extra cash. Then your holiday spending money is made available to you mid-October.

Christmas Club accounts earn interest throughout the year, and are a great tool to keep you from using the funds. By stashing away a little extra cash during the year, you won't need to charge as many of those gifts on a credit card - which could potentially cost more if you don't pay off the balance right away.

Stop in today to get your Christmas Club savings account set up and start budgeting for the 2020 holiday season.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING TIPS & SAFETY

It may seem early, but decorations will be hitting stores soon; followed shortly by all the holiday sales and deals. Help keep your holiday spending in control with these tips (and yourself safe while you're shopping):

Santa has a list, so can you. Make of list of all the "Nice" people you want to get gifts for this year and how much you plan to spend for each person. This will not only help you plan your purchases, but will give you a budget to stick to as well. If you allotted more than what you have available you can make adjustments before you start purchasing. It will also help you know what to watch for sales on.

Tip: Take this years' holiday budget and use that as a savings plan for next year. Divide it by 12 and start putting that much away each month so you have the cash ready for your 2020 holiday shopping!

Avoid Impulse Purchases. It's easy to get swept into a great deal while you're out shopping for others, but was it an item you needed right now? While there are great deals on electronics and home goods, those deals will also be there again next year. Make a list of items you want to upgrade and set aside funds to purchase it when you're ready.

Keep Your Receipts. They can be easy to lose if you toss them in the bag at each store. Ask to hold on to them, then put them in an envelope or folder at home. While some stores may accept returns without them, you may only receive store credit instead of your money back on that item you no longer need or if a better sale comes along after your purchase.

Protect Those Presents (and Yourself). After you make your purchases, don't just drop them in the back seat and run. Lock them in your trunk so they're not easily visible to thieves. Be aware of your surroundings when returning to your vehicle as well. Stores and malls will be busy, but keep an eye out for suspicious individuals. If you think someone is watching, consider getting in your car and moving to a new parking spot.

BLC OBSERVING OCTOBER 14TH FEDERAL HOLIDAY

The bank will be closed for business on **Columbus Day, Monday, October 14th, 2019**, allowing the BLC team to complete a day-long regulatory training session. We appreciate your patience as our team stays up-to-date on important banking information!

We will also be closed November 28 - Happy Thanksgiving!

BLC IN THE COMMUNITY

At BLC Community Bank we love to get involved! Here are the highlights of what we've been up to:

BAZAAR AFTER DARK

This year the booth was busy with kids coloring piggy banks and picking up balloons. If you didn't get a chance to visit us that day, stop in the lobby for a BLC coloring book to take home!

PILLARS, INC & ADOPT-A-FAMILY

Each quarter we pick a local organization to raise money for. With food days, jean days, and activities our team raised almost \$800 to donate to Pillars, Inc last quarter. This quarter our efforts will go to the local Adopt-A-Family organization.

ROCK CANCER

The music was great and the weather couldn't have been better for this rockin' cause. Our team volunteered painting faces and serving drinks at the beer stand.

Follow us on social media for more photos and updates!



Congratulations to Kenneth F., BLC's winner in the "Refresh & Renew Rewards" Debit Card Rewards campaign. Every time a BLC customer used their debit card from April 1 - June 30, 2019, they were entered into the drawing to receive a \$25 gift card.

Visit www.blccb.com/shazam to learn more about the current campaign, prizes and rules.

SUPPORTING LOCAL STUDENTS SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

BLC Community Bank Vice President Adam Lange recently attended the Little Chute High School Awards Night and presented \$1,000.00 scholarships on behalf of the bank to seniors Sophie Rambo and Matthew Sanderfoot.

Sophie Rambo received the Outstanding Senior Student Scholarship for both her academic and leadership accomplishments as well as her community involvement. She served as secretary of the Student Council, a Mustang Mentor, and captain of the volleyball and soccer teams and participated in many other school activities and programs. In addition, Sophie has contributed to her community as a volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club and Flex Academy and assisted with the Catholic Heart Work Camp and Feed My Starving Children.



Because of her love for children, Sophie will be attending the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh to pursue a major in elementary education.

Matthew Sanderfoot received the Outstanding Math Student Award for his academic excellence in the mathematics curriculum. He has been involved in numerous activities and volunteer opportunities such as the Mustang Mentor program, FBLA/DECA president, cross country and track team captain, Student Council treasurer, and National Honor Society vice president and treasurer. Matthew also participated in the FBLA Regional, State, and National Leadership Conference throughout his high school career where he qualified for Nationals his sophomore and junior year in Introduction to Financial Math and Entrepreneurship.



Matthew will be attending the University of Saint Thomas to pursue a double major in Actuarial Science and Finance.



CHECK AND MONITOR YOUR CREDIT REPORT

By law, you are entitled to receive your credit report for free once per year from each of the three major credit reporting agencies: TransUnion, Experian and Equifax. Take advantage of these free reports to check for errors and prevent and spot identity theft. Watch for incorrect late payments or new accounts that you never opened. You can choose to order one report now and others later, so you can keep track of any changes throughout the year.

Visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call (877) 322-8228 to order your reports.



TECHNOLOGY TIPS & TAKEAWAYS

COMPUTER SECURITY TIPS

1. Protect your computer. Install anti-virus software that scans your computer for "malware" that can steal login IDs, passwords and account information (including credit or debit card numbers). Also use a firewall program to guard against unauthorized access to your computer.

2. Safeguard mobile devices. Use well-known app stores to reduce your risk of downloading "apps" that contain malware. Opt for automatic updates to your operating system for the latest fixes. Also, use a pin or password to restrict access to your device in case it gets lost or stolen, and enable the "auto-lock" feature on your device.

3. Understand Internet safety features. When you are buying something online or filling out an application that contains sensitive personal information look for a Web address that starts with "https://". The "s" stands for "secure."

4. Be careful where and how you connect to the Internet. A public computer, such as an Internet café or hotel business center, may not have up-to-date security software and could be infected with malware. Also, for online banking or shopping, avoid connecting your computer, tablet or smartphone to a wireless network at a public "hotspot" (such as a coffee shop, hotel or airport).

5. Be suspicious. Ignore unsolicited emails and texts with links for immediate action or requesting personal information. Instead, contact the party directly using a phone number or email you have used before and know to be correct.

6. Take precautions on social media. Criminals can gather details such as date or place of birth, mother's maiden name or favorite pet and use that information to figure out and reset passwords. Fraudsters also may pretend to be your "friend" to persuade you to send money or divulge personal information.

Adapted from FDIC Consumer News