



Hi Everyone,

It's a cold, rainy winter day in Washington today, and I decided to share this beautiful picture from last summer of a butterfly on our zinnias to warm your day. There's a lot more to the cold in this picture than meets the eye. It's not just the weather that's cold. As I'm sure all of you have read by now, the economic conditions are getting pretty chilly too. My take on the economic problems we face may be a little different than a lot of other folks. To me the root of all of the problems is that we, as individuals and as a society, are living way beyond our means. We are taking actions without thinking about the ramifications for the future, and to me this is downright scandalous. There is a better way, and that leads me to wanting to talk about this beautiful picture.

Zinnias are one of my favorite flowers because they're beautiful and very easy to grow. When my wife and I plant zinnias, virtually every one of the seeds germinates, and within a few weeks, these beautiful flowers are the result. Savings is a lot like zinnias. Whenever you save and put the money into something like a money market account or a share certificate, it always germinates into more than what you started with through compounded interest.

But there's a catch, and that catch is like this picture. To get this picture of the beautiful butterfly, I had to have the patience to take about 20 pictures of the butterfly from various angles. I had to wait while it fluttered and flew about the yard. But the patience and all those pictures paid off in this one wonderful picture.

Savings is like this picture. It's not a right now thing. Savings takes patience and time. And sometimes things in our life flutter and fly all over the yard, or it can sure seem like it. But with discipline, your savings can become very beautiful too. And ultimately, it's the decision of each of us to save, live below our means and make decisions with our future in mind that will help our society solve its macro-economic issues.

Till Next Time,

Evan Clark, President and CEO

If you're buying a house that costs more than \$417,000, Department of Commerce FCU offers extremely competitive rates.

Now may also be a great time to think about refinancing your existing mortgage. With a lower fixed rate, you may be able to shorten the term of your mortgage loan while keeping approximately the same monthly payment – saving you thousands of dollars in interest over the term.

So, whether buying or refinancing, talk to your credit union today at (202) 482-1924 or simply go to our online mortgage center.



<http://docfcu.mortgagewebcenter.com/>

It's easy being green.

And with your credit union, it's also free! When you sign up for our e-Services, here's what you get:

Free Bill Payer

Free e-Statements

Free Direct Deposit

Free funds transfers between accounts

Free electronic alerts and notices

So, start saving time, money and paper today. It's simple. Go to www.docfcu.org and sign up for our member e-Services.

Life With A Purpose – Tip of the Month

We talk a lot about living below your means. But did you know that it's actually easier to achieve than you might think?

If you just switch from that daily gourmet double mocha latte to a regular coffee, you could save as much as \$2 with every cup. That's like adding over \$700 a year to your savings plan. Better yet, wait until you get to the office for that cup of coffee. That will put an additional \$600 to \$700 in your savings every year.

Sure, that caffeine rush is pretty hard to beat. But an extra \$1,300 to \$1,400 in your savings plan every year? Well, that's unbeatable!

Rethink your credit card debt.

The holidays are over, and those store credit card bills are starting to come in fast and furiously. The "special" offers that seemed so terrific last fall have reverted to standard interest rates that can be as high as 21% APR.

Couple this with that resolution you set for yourself to start living below your means, and you've got a real challenge on your hands. Department of Commerce FCU can help. We offer personal loans as low as 8.75% APR for a 36-month term*.

By converting your high interest store credit card balances to a fixed-term personal loan, you accomplish two goals. You'll have a smart plan to pay these balances off within a specific timeframe. And you can take the difference in the interest rates and put that money into a DOCFCU Share Certificate. In just several short years, you'll be free of store credit card debt AND have a healthy nest egg!

To get yourself started on the road to living below your means, apply online for a personal loan at www.docfcu.org.

*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Rate based on applicant's credit worthiness and is subject to change without notice.

April 15th is right around the corner.

Open or contribute to your IRA by April 15th, and you may be able to deduct that contribution, or a portion of it, on your tax return (Check with your tax advisor for details).

Now is also a great time to jump start that long-term savings plan by opening a high-yield Department of Commerce FCU Traditional IRA, Roth IRA or Education IRA. You'll enjoy great rates and higher returns that are guaranteed.

So, why wait any longer? Open or contribute to your DOCFCU IRA today by calling us at 202.482.4134 or go online to www.docfcu.org.

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