

# Chapter Reporter

2nd Quarter 2009



<http://www>

## Leery Travelers Turn to TravelMoney Cards as Cash Alternative



Worries about losing cash, or carrying large sums of cash, travelers' checks not being accepted and bulky to use, identity theft and card fraud schemes have travelers looking for a better, safe alternative. Many travelers have found VISA TravelMoney Cards to be the answer they are looking for.

TravelMoney Cards work just like any ATM/Debit card, with one distinct difference; they are pre-loaded with value before you travel. TravelMoney Cards, unlike travelers' checks, are easily reloadable, and after returning home, spending any unused balance is simple. Also, unlike cash, if a lost or stolen TravelMoney Card is reported to the issuing credit union, the remaining unused balance can be transferred to a new card. Finally, unlike a regular debit card, a TravelMoney Card does not have any link to a member's credit union account, so even if the card is lost or stolen, the money in the account is safe and the member's identity is protected.

TravelMoney Cards can be used to withdraw funds from an ATM or purchase goods and services, utilizing P.I.N. or point of sale, including cash back capability. All transactions are backed by VISA rules and regulations, including zero liability to the cardholder for signature-based transactions.

Whether a credit union sells 50 cards or 500 cards, it is both economical and convenient for any size credit union to provide this value-added service for members. Don't wait for the vacation season to start; be ready to meet your members' needs now! Call (800) 768-4282 or (770) 476-9625 and ask for Maureen Bock to get more information.

## GCUL Enlists PR Firm

As part of a continuous effort to keep credit unions in the news, on the radar of reporters and editors in the state, and on the minds of Georgia consumers, the Georgia Credit Union League has enlisted the services of Weber Shandwick Public Relations. Affiliated credit unions throughout Georgia will benefit from the efforts of this PR campaign, which is designed to support the goals in the statewide member growth initiative.

Weber Shandwick is a respected public relations agency, with extensive experience in the financial services industry and a clear understanding of the credit union market. With direct oversight by League personnel, the agency will devise a comprehensive statewide messaging and differentiation campaign to position Georgia credit unions as the premiere choice for consumer financial services in the state.

The PR firm will manage the following key activities:

- Develop messages critical to communicating the credit union difference.
- Properly position Georgia credit unions in the media.
- Increase overall awareness of credit unions throughout the state.
- Differentiate credit unions.
- Motivate prospective members to contact a credit union.
- Identify, leverage and engage advocates to create positive word of mouth.

Funding for the campaign is provided through League retained funds, requiring no additional financial support from credit unions. Updates and information about the public relations campaign will be provided periodically throughout the year.



# Can Members Reach You Following a Disaster?



## 2009 Vendor Guide

The 2009 online Vendor Guide makes your search for qualified vendors easier than ever. The online Vendor Guide features vendors that offer a variety of products and services to Georgia credit unions. This user-friendly site is available FREE to affiliated credit unions of the Georgia Credit Union League.

### When visiting the site, credit unions will:

- Be able to search for vendors alphabetically or by category
- Read a description of each vendor's products and services
- Access a link directly to the vendor's Web site
- Receive complete contact information to learn more about the products and services

Visit [www.gcu.org](http://www.gcu.org) and click on the "2009 Vendor Guide" link. For more information or questions, please contact Kristi Arrington at [kristia@gcu.org](mailto:kristia@gcu.org).

Finding a vendor has never been so easy!

In this season of unpredictable and sometimes severe weather, making sure your credit union is prepared for a disaster is an important consideration. Is your credit union prepared to weather the next storm? How will your members know whom to contact in the event that your operations are interrupted due to severe weather or other disaster?

The Credit Union National Association (CUNA), in partnership with VoiceGard, has a system to help credit union members get up-to-date information on the status of their credit union following a disaster. To date, 19 Georgia credit unions have signed on to the system.

The system is free to all credit unions regardless of their affiliation with CUNA or the League. Signing up is easy:

1. Contact VoiceGard's Recovery Team at (866) 652-7022 or complete the form at [http://www.cuna.org/initiatives/disaster\\_prepare/index.html](http://www.cuna.org/initiatives/disaster_prepare/index.html) under "Disaster Preparedness Tools," and email it to [operations@voicegard.com](mailto:operations@voicegard.com).
2. Provide the required information: Credit union name, state of main office, contact information.
3. Create two pre-recorded emergency messages: 1) to have posted in a non-crisis or inactive situation; and 2) to have posted in a crisis or active situation.
4. Inform members via the credit union Web site, statement stuffers, newsletters, lobby posters, etc., of the number to call in an emergency—1-877-CULOCATE (1-877-285-6228).

### How It Works

At the time of a disaster, a member will dial 1-877-CULOCATE (1-877-285-6228) and listen to a message, which will provide a prompt representing the affected state(s). Once the caller selects his/her respective state and credit union, a pre-recorded message from the credit union will play with information on how to contact the credit union during the crisis event or information stating that the credit union is not in a crisis situation.

For additional information or to receive sample pre-recorded messages, contact Anita Paul at [anitap@gcu.org](mailto:anitap@gcu.org) or (770) 476-9625. Also, CUNA has a list of disaster preparedness tools available at [http://www.cuna.org/initiatives/disaster\\_prepare/index.html](http://www.cuna.org/initiatives/disaster_prepare/index.html).

## Education Calendar

### Don't miss these outstanding education opportunities:

May 6-9 <b>GCUA Annual Convention</b> Savannah, GA	July 15 <b>BSA Workshop</b> Greensboro, NC
May 17-22 <b>CUNA Volunteer Certification School: Board and Supervisory Committee Tracks</b> St. Pete Beach, FL	August 25-27 <b>Idea Institute</b> Pine Mountain, GA
June 21-24 <b>America's Credit Union Conference</b> Boston, MA	September 9 <b>Teller Workshop</b> Florence, SC

## 2009 Economic Symposium

The 2009 Economic Symposium will take place June 3rd-4th at The Ritz-Carlton in downtown Atlanta. This year's program features Steve Rick, Senior Economist, CUNA & Affiliates, and Jeff Rosensweig, Associate Dean, Goizueta Business School of Emory University. Additional sessions include asset-liability management, a panel presentation addressing the status of the market crisis and others yet to be finalized.

"In light of ongoing volatility, we want to make sure our members are receiving the most up to date and accurate economic information for their strategic planning process," said Cory Johnston, SVP/CIO at Georgia Central. "For that reason, we have compiled a robust agenda that includes numerous industry experts and topics that are relevant to both the current and future economy."

## Join Georgia Central for a Dessert Reception in Savannah



At this year's Annual Convention – taking place May 6th-9th at The Westin Savannah Harbor – Georgia Central will host a Dessert Reception. This is an opportunity for the corporate to show appreciation to our members for their continued support. From 9:00 pm-11:00 pm on May 6th, guests can choose from an assortment of sweet treats and cordials – a fitting conclusion to their first day at the Convention.

To attend, please contact John Moates at 770.476.9704, ext. 324 or via e-mail at johnm@gacentral.org. You can also register online at [www.gacentral.org](http://www.gacentral.org) by clicking on the 2009 Annual Convention mini-banner on the right. **The registration deadline is Wednesday, April 29th.**

## Georgia Central Expands Due Diligence Corner

In a continuing effort to provide our members with the most recent industry news, the corporate has expanded the Due Diligence Corner on its Web site to include a section dedicated to events impacting U.S. Central and the Corporate Network. Contents include all of the communications sent to members by Greg Moore, President/CEO, presentations from several meetings this year, U.S. Central's financial statements and other key documents.

Providing information needed to satisfy both internal and external demands for safety and soundness for members, the Due Diligence Corner is updated often.

## MBS Fills Lending Gap Left by Banks

Member Business Solutions, LLC (MBS), which just celebrated a \$500 million underwriting milestone and its 50th credit union partner, is a CUSO created to help credit unions serve the needs of small businesses. With support from the expert staff at MBS, small business lending at credit unions has flourished – especially during a time when small business lending at conventional banks has dwindled.

With more than four years under its belt, MBS has been successful helping its credit union partners understand and meet the needs of small business owners. "From day one, our mantra to credit unions has been 'focus on small businesses,'" said MBS President, Jim Gallagher. "The best loans for most credit unions tend to be for \$500,000 or less, not multi-million dollar development loans. To date, MBS partner credit unions have experienced excellent results with regard to credit quality when lending to the small business market."

Local business needs are historically not well served by regional and national banks – a trend exacerbated by recent credit tightening. As a result, credit unions have an opportunity to benefit from offering small business lending: increased profit margins, better matching of ALM plans, attraction of new members, cross-selling opportunities and more.

To learn more about MBS, please contact your Georgia Central Relationship Manager at 770.476.9704.



## Chapter Meetings

If your Chapter is in need of a speaker for one of its upcoming meetings, Georgia Central's staff is available to address a range of topics, including the economy, markets and investing, and the Corporate Network. You can contact one of our Relationship Managers at 770.476.9704 to make the arrangements and check on staff availability.