

POSSIBILITIES

PUBLISHED FOR THE MEMBERS OF ASCEND FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



8 Million Ways
to Say 'Thank You'

INSIDE

holiday closing
bonus dividend and loan interest refund
credit card special
e-services
bond-a-month notice
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new atm network
notice of fee changes

OCTOBER 2011

QUICK READS

\$8 million returned to members

Ascend is returning \$8 million in bonus dividends and loan interest refunds to members! Members will see the return on their December statements.

Current Promotions

Now – Nov. 30

Credit Card Special

Upcoming Events

Oct. 20

International Credit Union Day

Shred Day

9-11 a.m.

Saturday, Nov. 12 – Nashville-Elm Hill financial center
2600 Elm Hill Pike

On the Road

Watch for Ascend – the preferred credit union of MTSU Athletics – at the Oct. 6 football game. Go Blue Raiders!

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

All credit union offices will be closed on **Thursday, Nov. 24** for Thanksgiving Day, **Monday, Dec. 26** for Christmas Day, and **Monday, Jan. 2** for New Year's Day. Your friends at Ascend Federal Credit Union wish you a very safe and happy holiday season!

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Save Your December Statement for Tax Purposes

Included in your Dec. 31, 2011, statement is information you will need to file your 2011 tax return. You should retain this statement for tax purposes. Remember, according to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations, if dividends (interest) earned are not reported on your tax return, a penalty may be generated.

Property Tax Payment from Escrow Accounts

Unless your real estate loan was previously set up to pay your real estate taxes prior to year-end, your taxes will be paid in 2012. If you would like your taxes to be paid in 2011, please notify our Mortgage Servicing Department before 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 29, by calling 1-931-454-1334, 1-931-454-1353, or toll-free 1-800-342-3086, extension 1334 or 1353.

IRS Reporting Requirements

Ascend Federal Credit Union will be sending the following information to members as required by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for tax year 2011 in January 2012. Please check the forms that you receive carefully and notify the credit union if you have any questions.

U-5498-FMV (Fair Market Value of your IRA)

Your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) with us includes only deposit investments. The balance shown on the year-end statement and on the IRS Form U-5498 will be the Fair Market Value as of Dec. 31, 2011.

IRS Form 1099-R

If you received any distribution from your IRA during 2011, we will prepare and send to you a report of this distribution on IRS Form 1099-R. You may need to attach a copy of this form to your 2011 income tax return.

IRS Form 1098

If you paid mortgage interest of \$600 or more on any one mortgage during calendar year 2011, we will send you a report of this interest on IRS Form 1098. Each mortgage is reported on a separate form.

Form 1099-INT

This form reports interest income of \$10 or more, excluding interest on an IRA that you received and/or any amount withheld for federal income taxes under the backup withholding rules. Interest income from savings bonds will also be reported on this form instead of being reported on a separate Form 1099-INT.



8 Million Ways to Say 'Thank You'

Ascend Returns \$8 Million to Members

You choose Ascend for great products, competitive rates and excellent member service from people you know and trust.

You have options as to where you choose to conduct your financial business. As a not-for-profit financial cooperative, Ascend Federal Credit Union recognizes the importance of member loyalty. That is why we are pleased to once again reward members who bring the majority of their business to the credit union by returning \$8 million in bonus dividends and loan interest refunds. The more business each member brings to our cooperative, the higher the individual return.

"I cannot think of a better way to thank members for their loyalty than by returning money to them," Ascend President and CEO Caren Gabriel said. "We are pleased to once again be able to offer a return, and we are very excited to be returning \$3 million more than last year."

The total amount Ascend has returned to members over the past seven years is more than \$39 million.

The return will be calculated as a percentage of total year-to-date dividends, including IRAs, and total year-to-date interest paid on all loans. The period covered is Jan. 1 through Nov. 30, 2011.

Members will see their return on their December statements.

Get *the* Right Card

- > NO ANNUAL FEE
- > NO BALANCE TRANSFER FEE
- > NO FEE FOR CASH ADVANCES
- > RATES AS LOW AS 9.50%* FOR VISA GOLD AND PLATINUM



Scan here to apply online



It's Amazing What You Can Do with the Right Card

Tired of the hassles you get with your credit card from the other guys?

Get the right card – a Visa card from Ascend Federal Credit Union.

Now through Nov. 30, get a 2% cash bonus¹ when you transfer at least \$500 to an Ascend Visa. How does that help you? Transfer \$3,000 and get a cash bonus of \$60. Transfer \$6,000 for the maximum cash bonus of \$120.

With a cash bonus and great rates, imagine what the right card can do for you! Apply for your Ascend Visa at your nearest Ascend financial center or online at ascendfcu.org.

*Your APR will be based on your credit score. You will be informed of the APR for which you qualify before you become contractually liable. All loans subject to credit approval.
1) The cash bonus will be credited to your Ascend Federal Credit Union Visa card account.

THE TIME TO BUY OR REFINANCE A HOME IS NOW

If you've been on the fence about buying or refinancing a home, it's time to make your move.

At Ascend Federal Credit Union, mortgage rates are near all-time lows. Plus, when you finance or refinance at the credit union, you know exactly with whom you are dealing if you ever have a question about the loan.

Are you looking for the last house you'll own? Then Ascend's conventional fixed-rate mortgages are an excellent choice. But, if you'll be moving in five or six years, a fixed-rate balloon mortgage may be your best option.

Check out the latest mortgage rates at ascendfcu.org, then apply for your loan online. Or, make an appointment with an Ascend Mortgage Service Representative by calling 800-342-3086, ext. 1300, or 1-931-454-1300.



CONSUMER ADVICE: HOW TO AVOID PHISHING SCAMS

The number and sophistication of phishing scams sent out to consumers is continuing to increase dramatically. While online account access and e-commerce is very safe, as a general rule you should be careful about giving out your personal financial information over the Internet. The Anti-Phishing Working Group has compiled a list of recommendations below that you can use to avoid becoming a victim of these scams:

- ✓ Be suspicious of any email with urgent requests for personal financial information.
 - Phishers typically include upsetting or exciting (but false) statements in their emails to get people to react immediately.
 - They typically ask for information such as usernames, passwords, credit card numbers, Social Security numbers, date of birth, etc.
 - Phishing emails are typically not personalized, but they can be. Valid messages from your credit union or e-commerce company generally are personalized, but always call to check if you are unsure.

- ✓ Don't use the links in an email, instant message, or chat to get to any web page if you suspect the message might not be authentic or you don't know the sender or user's identity. Instead, contact the company on the telephone or log onto the Web site directly by typing in the Web address in your browser.

- Avoid filling out forms in email messages that ask for personal financial information; you should only communicate information such as credit card numbers or account information via a secure Web site or the telephone.

✓ Always ensure that you're using a secure Web site when submitting credit card or other sensitive information via your Web browser.

- Phishers are now able to 'spoof,' or forge both the https:// that you normally see when you're on a secure Web server and a legitimate-looking address. You may even see both in the link of a scam email. Again, make it a habit to enter the address of any shopping auction or financial transaction Web site yourself and not depend on displayed links.
- Phishers may also forge the yellow lock you would normally see near the bottom of your screen on a secure site. The lock has usually been considered as another indicator that you are on a 'safe' site. The lock, when double-clicked, displays the security certificate for the site. If you get any warnings displayed that the address of the site you have displayed does not match the certificate, do not continue.

✓ Regularly log into your online accounts to ensure that all transactions are legitimate. If anything is suspicious or you don't recognize the transaction, contact the credit union immediately.

✓ Ensure that your browser is up to date and security patches applied.

Used with permission from Credit Union National Association, www.cuna.org.

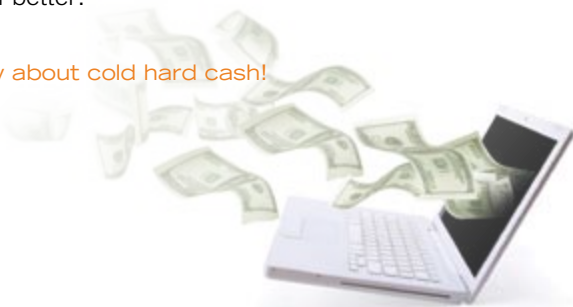




EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE WITH E-PAY!

Sure, E-PAY from Ascend is fast, easy and convenient, but what can make paying bills electronically even better?

How about cold hard cash!



Members who enroll in E-PAY in October or November and pay three bills will receive \$10 plus a \$1 bonus for each of the next five bills paid online that same month.*

Why E-PAY?

- ✓ **Ease:** It's easy to set up and easy to use.
- ✓ **Speed:** You can make a payment in seconds.
- ✓ **Convenience:** No more checks or stamps to buy.
- ✓ **Control:** You determine how much and when you want your payment to be made.

Visit ascendfcu.org and register for E-PAY today!

*The incentives apply only to E-BRANCH users without E-PAY who enroll and pay the required number of bills in the respective month.

EMOTIONALLY ATTACHED TO PAPER?

End Your Paper Dependence with e-statements from Ascend!

You love that old familiar piece of paper in your hand.

Your monthly statement from Ascend has everything – deposits, withdrawals, balances. You can even use it as a reminder to pay your Ascend Visa every month.

But did you know that you can get all of that – including the monthly reminder – without the paper?

An e-statement from Ascend is a free electronic version of your monthly statement located securely within password-protected E-BRANCH. Every month when your e-statement is ready to view, you get an e-mail notifying you it's ready. When you log into E-BRANCH and open your e-statement, you see it's exactly like the monthly statement you're used to, only without the paper.

And talk about convenient storage, you can easily download a copy of your e-statement and save it to a CD, DVD or a flash drive.

Don't have a flash drive? **Be one of the first 500 people to sign up for e-statements by Oct. 31 and Ascend will give you a free 1GB flash drive!**

Registering for e-statements is easy. Log onto E-BRANCH and select "Account Access," then "Online Statements." Read the disclosure and click if you accept. When your e-statement is ready, you'll receive an email.

End your paper dependence by registering for e-statements today!

NO CHECKING ACCOUNT? TIME TO CHECK OUT ASCEND!

You've had a savings account with us since you were young, and now you have a loan or two.

What about a checking account?

If you don't have a checking account, or if you have one someplace else, it's time to see what a checking account from Ascend has to offer:

Freedom Card – Ascend's super convenient check card that helps you pay in person or online.

- You save money because you buy fewer checks.
- Fee-free access to more than 200 proprietary and network ATMs.
- Freedom Card users receive a rate reduction on new or used auto loans.

E-services – Each of these free services adds security and convenience to your financial life.

- E-BRANCH – view balances and transfer funds between accounts.
- E-PAY – pay bills online.
- e-statements – receive your monthly statement electronically.
- Plus, there are no checks, envelopes or stamps to buy!

With an Ascend checking account, there are no minimum balance requirements, no service charges and no per-check charges.

For more information about an Ascend checking account, visit ascendfcu.org or call 800-342-3086.

SAVING MONEY – A GREAT WAY TO END THE YEAR!

If you've been waiting all year to buy a vehicle, your patience is about to pay off.

Right now, auto dealers are slashing prices of 2011 models to make room for new vehicles. What does that mean for credit union members? Low prices on the lot and the best vehicle financing at Ascend.

Qualified members get rates as low as 3.99%* for new vehicles and as low as 4.24%* for used ones. Plus, with terms of up to 84 months for new vehicles and up to 66 months for used vehicles, your best option is to take the dealer rebate and finance your vehicle with Ascend.

Make the rate for which you qualify 0.25% lower by authorizing payments through payroll deduction or direct deposit. And, if you're an active Freedom Card user, you can knock another quarter percent off your rate!

Apply for your vehicle loan online at ascendfcu.org, or visit your nearest Ascend financial center.

*The quoted APRs (annual percentage rates) are fixed rates based on your credit score and the term of the loan. You will be informed of the APR for which you qualify before you become contractually liable for the loan account. All loans subject to credit approval. Rates subject to change without notice.

BOND-A-MONTH PROGRAM

Government's Online Initiative Will End Bond-a-Month Program

An effort by the federal government to drive the purchase of bonds online will end the Bond-a-Month program administered by Ascend.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury will stop issuing paper bonds effective Jan. 1, 2012, so the Bond-a-Month program will end with the December 2011 bonds.

According to a press release from the Treasury, the move to issue electronic rather than paper bonds will save American taxpayers approximately \$70 million over the next five years.

"But savings bonds, introduced in 1935, are not going away," the release states. "Electronic savings bonds in Series EE and I will remain available through purchase in TreasuryDirect, a secure, web-based system operated by The Bureau of Public Debt – where investors have been purchasing savings bonds, available 24/7, since 2002."

For more information about the elimination of paper savings bonds and how to enroll in TreasuryDirect, visit www.treasurydirect.gov.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Ascend to Once Again Co-Sponsor 'Warm Coats From Warm Hearts'

Bring your new or gently used coat to the marked collection bins inside any of Ascend's 15 Middle Tennessee financial centers **Oct. 10 – Nov. 1**.

See the following page for more details.

Celebrate International Credit Union Day October 20

See the following page for more details.

Christmas Club Funds Available Nov. 1

Money doesn't grow on trees.

But it does grow when you make steady deposits to an Ascend Christmas Club account.

If you have a Christmas Club account, your diligent saving is about to be rewarded. Funds from your Christmas Club account will automatically roll into your Share or Share Draft account at the end of October.

If you would like to see how saving even a very small amount on a regular basis can add up, there's no better time like the present to open your own Christmas Club account. Make your saving super easy by making it automatic. Set up direct deposit or payroll deduction and watch your Christmas Club funds grow with each paycheck.

Open your free Ascend Christmas Club account today!

Don't Miss Our Last Shred Day of the Year!

You have one more opportunity to take advantage of an Ascend Shred Day this year.

From 9-11 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 12, bring documents to be shredded to the parking lot of the Nashville-Elm Hill financial center located at 2600 Elm Hill Pike.

Please limit items you bring to Shred Day to no more than two boxes. No newspaper or cardboard; paper only.

Sign up for e-statements and register for a chance to win a personal shredder to be given away Nov. 14.*

**No purchase necessary to register or win. Registration forms will be available inside the Nashville-Elm Hill financial center until Nov. 12. Ascend Federal Credit Union employees, officials and any of their family members are not eligible to enter the drawing.*

Apply for Ascend's Scholarship by March 1

Students, mark your calendars!

On Jan 1, you can begin applying for the Ascend Federal Credit Union Scholarship.

For the tenth consecutive year, Ascend will award \$1,000 non-recurring scholarships to 10 credit union members. Whether you will be graduating high school and heading to college in 2012 or if you're already in college and looking for funds to continue your education, the Ascend scholarship is for you.

Every aspect of the scholarship – from application and submission to notification of award recipients – is online. For complete scholarship requirements and to access the application, simply click the scholarship banner at ascendfcu.org beginning Jan. 1.

The deadline is March 1, but don't wait until the last minute. Spend the first day of the New Year doing something really worthwhile – like applying for the Ascend scholarship!

Please note: If you acquired a copy of the scholarship application prior to Jan. 1, 2010, please discard it because that format is no longer valid. Applications will only be accepted online.

All family members of Ascend Federal Credit Union's officials and employees are excluded from eligibility. Scholarship winners may reapply for the next academic year.

INTERNATIONAL CREDIT UNION DAY

If You're a Credit Union Member, You're in Good Company

More than 49,000 credit unions in the world serve nearly 184 million people in 97 countries.

On Oct. 20, join fellow credit union members worldwide in celebrating National Credit Union Day.

This year's theme, "Credit Unions Build a Better World," celebrates the important economic and social contributions credit unions make to their communities worldwide.

What makes credit unions unique?

- **Equal Ownership** – Credit unions are democratically controlled and member-owned and operated. Each member has equal ownership and one vote regardless of how much money he or she has in savings.

- **Not For Profit** – Credit unions are not-for-profit financial co-operatives that provide a safe, convenient place for members to save money and access loans and other financial services at reasonable rates.

- **Social Purpose: People Helping People** – Credit unions exist to serve their members, not to make a profit. Every member counts, including those of modest means. This "people-first" philosophy encourages credit unions and their employees to get involved in their community and support worthwhile causes.



- **Volunteer Leadership** – Each credit union is governed by a volunteer board of directors elected by and from the credit union's membership.

- **Financial Education for Members** – Credit unions place particular importance on educational opportunities for their members and the public to help everyone become better educated consumers of financial services.

- **Trust** – This year, more than ever, credit unions have received positive press for being trustworthy and resilient institutions during a tumultuous time. Credit union members worldwide can be proud of these accomplishments and rest assured that their money is safe at the credit union.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP

'WARM COATS FROM WARM HEARTS'

Ascend to Once Again Co-Sponsor 'Warm Coats From Warm Hearts'

Ascend Federal Credit Union members opened their hearts in a big way last year to ensure their fellow Middle Tennesseans had a warm coat for the winter.

Ascend is asking members to do it again in 2011.

The credit union is pleased to announce that it is once again partnering with WSMV Channel 4 in Nashville and other community sponsors for the "Warm Coats from Warm Hearts" campaign. Bring your new or gently used coat to the marked collection bins inside any of Ascend's 15 Middle Tennessee financial centers Oct. 10 – Nov. 1.

"Member response last year was phenomenal," Ascend President and CEO Caren Gabriel said. "We are very excited for another opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors in Middle Tennessee. Just donating one or more coats can make a huge impact in someone's life."



TRUST US TO GUIDE YOU THROUGH LIFE'S FINANCIAL JOURNEY.

Because no one has the same lifestyle and goals, everybody's financial needs are different.

Our financial advisors are here to help you:

- Roll over your 401(k)/pension plan if you've changed jobs
 - Create a retirement income plan
 - Manage your investments
- Make the right choices for insurance
- Develop a comprehensive financial plan

Simply call us to get your financial journey started today!

The MEMBERS Financial Services Center
 Located at Ascend Federal Credit Union
 1611 North Jackson Street
 Tullahoma, TN 37388



RETIREMENT, INVESTMENT AND INSURANCE SERVICES FOR LIFE

Randall W. Harris, CFP®*, ChFC • 931-454-1307
 Kent L. Hart, Financial Advisor • 615-849-7388

800.342.3086, ext. 1307 or 7388 • Fax 931.454.1339

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*The CFP certification marks are not affiliated with CUNA Brokerages Services, Inc.

NEW ATM NETWORK

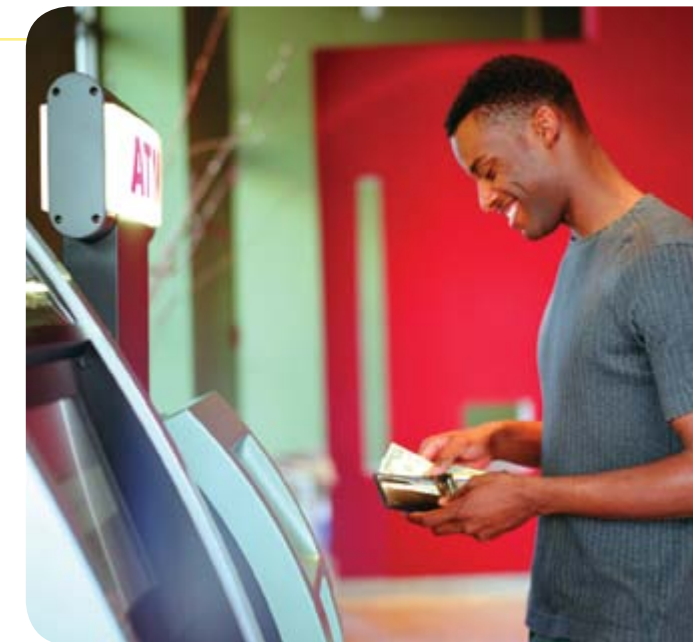
New Network Will Offer More Convenient ATM Access

We are pleased to inform you that Ascend will be offering added member convenience with access to a new ATM network.

Members will be able to use their Freedom and ATM cards to make fee-free transactions at any ATM in this nationwide network.

The new network consists of approximately 33,100 ATMs across the U.S. In Tennessee alone, Ascend members will be able to make fee-free transactions at 371 ATMs.

Please watch for more details about this new means of access in the January 2012 issue of *Possibilities*.



NOTICE OF FEE CHANGES

Please note the following new and increased fees relevant to consumer and Business Solutions accounts effective Jan. 1, 2012:

Share/Share Draft Account Fees

NSF Fee (Share Draft/ACH/Freedom Card/ATM Card/E-Pay/Overdraft Advantage)	\$25.00 per item
Stop Payment Fee (Share Draft/ACH/E-Pay)	\$25.00 per request
Draft Copy/E-Pay Cleared Check Copy Fee	\$ 5.00 per item up to \$50, then \$3.00
Account Closing Fee (Accounts which have been opened 60 days or less)	\$15.00 or available balance, whichever is less

Other Service Fees (Applicable to All Accounts)

Statement Copy/History Fee	\$ 5.00 per statement
Wire Transfer (outgoing foreign fee)	\$35.00 per transfer
Wire Transfer (incoming domestic or foreign)*	\$ 5.00 per transfer
Payment by Phone/Web (Check, Credit Card, ACH)*	\$10.00 per transfer
Travel Card Reload Fee*	\$ 2.00 per reload
Safe Deposit Box Drilling Fee	\$125.00 per request
Safe Deposit Box Re-Key Fee	\$75.00 per request

Please feel free to contact the credit union at 1-800-342-3086 with any questions you may have concerning the changes.

*New fees.



P.O. Box 1210
520 Airpark Drive
Tullahoma, TN 37388

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
NASHVILLE, TN
PERMIT #1

FOR OUR MEMBERS IN THE HOME OF:



We do business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act. This credit union is federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration. Membership is limited.

LOCATIONS

www.ascendfcu.org • memberservice@ascendfcu.org • 1-800-342-3086

CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

P.O. Box 1210
520 Airpark Drive
Tullahoma, TN 37388

ARNOLD AIR FORCE BASE

452 N. Hap Arnold Drive
Arnold AFB, TN 37389

COLUMBIA

981 W. James Campbell Blvd.
Columbia, TN 38401

COOL SPRINGS

3150 Aspen Grove Drive
Franklin, TN 37067

FRANKLIN COUNTY

2459 Dechard Blvd.
Winchester, TN 37398

LEWISBURG

1372 Rock Crusher Road
Lewisburg, TN 37091

MANCHESTER

1929 McArthur St.
Manchester, TN 37355

MCMINNVILLE

Three Star Mall
1410 Sparta St.
McMinnville, TN 37110

MURFREESBORO

1250 W. Clark Blvd.
Murfreesboro, TN 37129

750 S. Church St.
Murfreesboro, TN 37130

4051 Franklin Road
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

NASHVILLE

6201 Centennial Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37209

2600 Elm Hill Pike
Nashville, TN 37214

SHELBYVILLE

1900 N. Main St.
Shelbyville, TN 37160

SMYRNA

769 Nissan Drive
Smyrna, TN 37167

TULLAHOMA

1611 N. Jackson St.
Tullahoma, TN 37388

Raising Possibilities