

# Financial Focus

Organized 1934

*Working Together for Financial Freedom*

January 2014

120866

## In This Issue

- Mortgages and Home Buying Q&A.....Page 2
- Voices of Inspiration Nominations.....Page 2
- Buy Your Luxury Auto in 2014!.....Page 3
- Launch of Redesigned FreedomCU.org...Page 4
- FREE Outdoor Winter Concert.....Page 4

## Freedom Celebrates Our 80th Anniversary in 2014!

Since 1934, Freedom has been a trusted financial resource for our Members, offering better rates, fewer fees, and expert advice. This year, Freedom is proud to celebrate our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary— and we will be offering product and service specials, contests, giveaways, and more as a way of saying “thank you” to you, our Members, who have helped us grow and thrive over the years.

As part of the celebration, **we want to hear your stories about Freedom**. Email [anniversary@freedomcu.org](mailto:anniversary@freedomcu.org) to tell us what made you join the Credit Union, how we’ve helped you over the years, or simply what makes Freedom a great place to be a Member. Every person who submits a Freedom story will receive a Freedom prize pack!

To stay up to date on the full schedule of anniversary-year activities, “like” Freedom’s Facebook page. Join the party as we celebrate our 80<sup>th</sup>!

## President’s Message



As we enter 2014, the Ben Bernanke era as Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank will come to a close. With a new Fed Chairman we usually anticipate a change in monetary policy but I wouldn’t expect to see that this time.

The economy is still growing too slowly for any change in short term interest rates, so all eyes will be on the tapering, or phasing out, of the Fed’s \$85 billion-a-month bond buying program. As the Fed buys fewer bonds, long term rates will rise because the Fed will no longer be subsidizing rates by injecting cash into the economy. One of the side effects of this move is higher mortgage rates.

The big unknown is how the stock market will react. Many experts think that the price of stocks will fall as they did last May when tapering was first mentioned. Others feel tapering is a sign that the economy is growing and stocks will benefit as corporate earnings increase. Only time will tell.

### Freedom had a good year...

For the year we had increases in loans, shares and membership. This is a trend that we have been able to maintain in spite of an economy that continues to improve at a very slow pace. However, these are still very difficult economic times for some of our Members who have lost a job or had their hours cut back.

Loan demand increased around 13%. This is a dramatic increase over last year. Members are now starting to make major purchases that had been put off since the Great Recession. Home Equity Loans have also increased as Members are once again investing in their homes as the housing market has started to rebound.

Shares, on the other hand, increased only about 5%. Some Members have been lured to the stock market with its record highs and increased risk. A few Members have been attracted to more risky investments in search of higher yields, foregoing the safety of insured shares and forgetting the lessons of 2008.

Over the past year we had a net increase of over 1,400 new Members bringing our total membership to more than 60,600.

Remember, we are here to help you. If you are having a problem or just need some advice please give us a call.

We wish you a Happy New Year and thank you for your membership and for believing in “People Helping People.”



Lee T. MacMinn  
President /CEO





## Buying, Selling Or Refinancing Your Home This Year?

### Trust Freedom To Help You At Every Step

Buying or selling a home requires an investment of your time and money—and Freedom is here for assistance.

- Apply for your pre-approved **Mortgage** with Freedom and enjoy quick loan decisions, low rates, and flexible terms.
- Use our **CU Realty Service** to find out more about home values, search listings, and get selling tips and neighborhood and school data.
- Turn to Freedom's **CU Abstract Title Agency** for full-service title insurance services.
- Attend a **FREE Home Buying Seminar** for real, practical advice from real estate agents, and our lending experts.

#### Considering an upgrade to your home?

Look no further than a Freedom Home Equity Loan or Line of Credit! With Loan rates as low as 2.99% APR\* and Line of Credit Rates at a competitive 3.99% APR\*\*, **Freedom is your one-stop shop for ALL of your real estate needs.**

To find out more, visit the Mortgage & Real Estate Center on FreedomCU.org, or call a Mortgage Representative at 215-612-6196.

\*Annual Percentage Rate (APR) applies to Loan-to-Value (LTV) less than or equal to 80%. APR will not be less than 2.99% or greater than 6.24%. The interest rate you receive will be based on your credit history. Hazard Insurance is required. For loans over \$100,000, Title Insurance is required. Low, all-services fee of \$95. Loan subject to final approval. Terms and rates subject to change without notice and apply to loans in the 2nd lien position. \*\*Annual Percentage Rate (APR) applies to Loan-to-Value (LTV) less than or equal to 80%. Home Equity Line of Credit is subject to a Variable Rate which is based on the highest Prime Rate as published in the Wall Street Journal and will be the rate 10 days prior to the first day of each calendar quarter of each year. Rate will never be less than 3.99% nor greater than 18%. The interest rate you receive will be based on your credit history. APR as low as Prime Rate - 0.01% Margin. Rates accurate since 1/1/14. Hazard Insurance is required. For loans over \$100,000, Title Insurance is required. Low, all services fee of \$95. Line of Credit subject to final approval. Terms and rates subject to change without notice.

## Voices Of Inspiration Nominations Are Now Open!

The 8th annual Voices of Inspiration Awards will once again celebrate extraordinary educators in the Montgomery County School District—and we need your help! If you know an outstanding MontCo teacher, counselor, or support instructor who demonstrates a true dedication to young people, send us your recommendation. That teacher could be recognized as a Voices of Inspiration Award finalist and winner! The nominations deadline is March 24th, and it's never too early to nominate. For details and a Nomination Form, visit News & Events on FreedomCU.org.

## Real Estate Q&A Freedom Lending Experts Weigh In On Hot Topics

### HAVE I MISSED THE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY TO REFINANCE?

For many, the answer is no. Generally, if your interest rate is 5% or higher, the current interest rate environment may make refinancing the right choice for you. Additionally, if you have an adjustable-rate loan that is ready to adjust, or if you are looking to shorten your term or have more than one mortgage and could consolidate, refinancing may also be a viable option. Remember, it never hurts to inquire!

### IS IT A GOOD TIME TO BUY A HOME?

Many factors indicate that it is. Interest rates remain historically low. The fear of uncertainty in the housing sector has subsided and prices have not only stabilized but are increasing. So today might be the perfect time to take advantage of low rates and reasonable prices.

### IF I AM A BUYER, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Greg Parker, an associate broker with Coldwell Banker Preferred and a CU Realty agent, advises, "Be prepared. The market is becoming more competitive for buyers. To ensure your success, assemble your team before you start looking at homes. Get pre-approved and hire a proactive buyer's agent who understands your needs."

### IF I AM A SELLER, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Small improvements can make a big impact on that way potential buyers see your home. "Make sure your property is in top shape. Minimal renovations can make all the difference since many of today's buyers don't have the extra money for repairs," Parker says.

### DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE WHERE I GET MY FINANCING?

It does! At Freedom, Members enjoy not only competitive rates and excellent service, but can actually save additional money. Use a trusted Realtor® from the Exclusive Agent Network offered by our partner, CU Realty Services, and you could get thousands back in commission rebates when you buy or sell. Plus, go with Freedom's CU Abstract for title insurance services and you could save hundreds more!

Whether you're buying, refinancing, in need of pre-approval, or just have questions, Freedom can help — call a Mortgage Representative at 215-612-6196 today!



## Go Ahead... You've Earned It Start 2014 In Style!

You have always put others first. From your children to your job, your focus was on the well-being of others. Well now, it's your turn. Start the new year right by purchasing that vehicle you've always wanted. With Freedom's excellent Vehicle Loan rates and FREE Vehicle Buying Advisor, let us get you behind the wheel of the car of your dreams.

By financing your loan with Freedom, you can take the cash back offered by the dealer and save in the long run. And as an added incentive, if you close on an Auto Loan with Freedom by February 28, 2014 we will give you a **\$200 Visa® Gift Card!**\* Visit [FreedomCU.org](http://FreedomCU.org) to learn more and apply.

Take a look at your savings when you work with Freedom to take advantage of buying expertise plus exclusive dealer offers:

Vehicle Sale Price: \$30,000		
	Paying Cash	Freedom Credit Union
<b>Interest Rate</b>	0%	2.99% **
<b>Manufacturers' Rebate</b>	\$0	\$3,000
<b>Amount Financed</b>	\$30,000	\$27,000
<b>3-Year Total Interest Paid</b>	\$0	\$1,260.44
<b>Total Payments of</b>	\$30,000	\$28,260.44
<b>FCU financing with a dealer rebate saves...</b>	<b>\$1,739.56</b>	

\*\$200 Visa Gift Card incentive applicable only on Vehicle Loans of \$25,000 or more. Offer valid on Loans opened 1/1/14 to 2/28/14. Other terms and restrictions may apply.

\*\*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. Rates accurate as of 12/9/13. The interest rate you receive will be based on your credit history. APR will not be less than 2.99%, or greater than 11.99%. Satisfactory vehicle insurance required. Freedom Loans and Lines of Credit can't be refinanced and other conditions may apply. Terms and rates are subject to change without notice.

## Make Your 2014 Financial Resolutions!

Make these **three, simple resolutions** this New Year and better your financial life in 2014! And, don't forget— Freedom is always here to help with your goals. Visit [FreedomCU.org](http://FreedomCU.org) to learn more about all we offer.

- Eliminate high-interest debt.** Conduct an audit of the financial health of your family. Find out what debts have the highest interest rates and either refinance them with a lower-rate loan, or make an effort to pay them down throughout the year. You can save thousands each year by making sure that you have the best interest rate that is available to you.
- Review your insurances.** From health insurance to homeowners insurance, review all of your insurance policies to make sure that they fit your needs and are fairly priced. Call your current insurers and see if there are ways to lower your rate. Then, double-check for discounts— did you know that Freedom Members can save up to 15% on auto and homeowners insurance with Liberty Mutual?
- Start a slush fund.** There's nothing worse than needing four new tires or a hot water heater when you least expect it. By starting a slush fund and saving a specific amount each month for emergencies, you won't have to worry about where to find the funds. A Freedom Club Account can help you save today!

### MONEY MARKET, CHECKING & SAVINGS RATES

Account	Dividend Rate	APY <sup>1</sup>
Money Market		
\$0 - \$9,999.99	.20%	.20%
\$10,000 and above	.30%	.30%
Checking	.10%	.10%
Primary & Club Savings	.20%	.20%
Education & IRA Savings	.20%	.20%
Health Savings	.10%	.10%

<sup>1</sup>APY = Annual Percentage Yield. Rates accurate as of 12/9/13. Rates subject to change without notice and may change after Account is opened. Fees may reduce earnings. Regulations prohibit payment in excess of available earnings. Dividends on Savings and Checking Accounts are computed monthly on average daily balances of \$5 or more and posted monthly. The Money Market Account has a variable rate which will be greater than our Primary Savings rate, and subject to monthly adjustments. Dividends will be paid monthly on the average daily balance, based upon the current tier level rates.

### SHARE & IRA CERTIFICATE (CD) RATES

Account Type	Dividend Rate	APY <sup>1</sup>
6 Months	.30%	.30%
12 Months	.45%	.45%
18 Months	.60%	.60%
24 Months	.85%	.85%
36 Months	1.34%	1.35%
48 Months	1.64%	1.65%
60 Months	1.98%	2.00%

<sup>1</sup>APY = Annual Percentage Yield. Rates accurate as of 12/9/13. Minimum opening deposit and amount to earn APY is \$500, \$250 for ages 25 and under. Penalty required for early withdrawal. Fees may reduce earnings. Regulations prohibit payment in excess of available earnings. Terms and rates are subject to change without notice.

### CREDIT CARD RATES<sup>2</sup>

Credit Card Type	APR <sup>1</sup>
Visa® Classic/Gold	0.99% Intro APR, then as low as 8.9%
Student Visa	11.90%
Share Secured Visa	15.90%

### NEW/USED VEHICLE LOAN RATES

Term	APR <sup>1</sup>
1-48 months <sup>3</sup>	as low as 2.99%
49-66 months <sup>3</sup>	as low as 2.99%
67-75 months <sup>3</sup>	as low as 3.99%
76-84 months (New Only)	4.99%

### HOME EQUITY LOAN RATES<sup>4</sup>

Term	APR <sup>1,5</sup>	Monthly payment per \$10,000 borrowed
1 - 60 months	2.99%	\$179.70
61 - 120 months	3.99%	101.25
121 - 180 months	4.24%	75.20

### HOME EQUITY LINE OF CREDIT<sup>4,6</sup>

Index	Margin	APR <sup>1,3</sup>
Prime Rate	-0.01%	3.99%

### FIRST MORTGAGES

Call Freedom at 215-612-6196 for current rates and terms. Call CU Abstract at 267-803-5000 for title insurance services.

### OTHER LOAN RATES

Type	APR <sup>1</sup>
Share Secured Loan	7.00%
Share Certificate Secured Loan <sup>7</sup>	7.00%
Personal Loan <sup>8</sup>	as low as 7.99%
Overdraft/Line of Credit <sup>9</sup>	as low as 10.90%

<sup>1</sup>APR=Annual Percentage Rate. The maximum unsecured debt per Member is \$30,000. Rates accurate as of 12/9/13. Terms and rates subject to change without notice. <sup>2</sup>The interest rate you receive will be based on your credit history. Rate will not be less than listed above or greater than 18%. <sup>3</sup>0.99% Introductory APR applies to all purchases, cash advances, and balance transfers made using the new Freedom Classic and Gold Cards during the 6-month introductory period. This offer is only available for new Card applications. Card issuance subject to final approval. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Offer subject to change without notice. <sup>4</sup>The interest rate you receive will be based on your credit history. Rate will not be less than listed above or greater than 11.99%. <sup>5</sup>APR applies to Loan-to-Value (LTV) less than or equal to 80%. Hazard Insurance is required. For loans over \$100,000, Title Insurance is required. Low, all services fee of \$95. <sup>6</sup>APR will not be less than 3.99% or greater than 6.99%. The interest rate you receive will be based on your credit history. Make 60 payments of \$184.20 per \$10,000 borrowed at 3.99% APR. Applies to loans in the 2nd lien position. <sup>7</sup>Home Equity Line of Credit is subject to a Variable Rate which is based on the highest Prime Rate as published in the Wall Street Journal and will be the rate 10 days prior to the first day of each calendar quarter of each year. <sup>8</sup>The greater of 7% APR or 2% above the Term Share Certificate rate. <sup>9</sup>The interest rate you receive will be based on your credit history. APR will not be less than listed above or greater than 16.99%. Loan minimum is \$500. <sup>10</sup>The interest rate you receive will be based on your credit history. APR will not be less than listed above or greater than 17.9%.



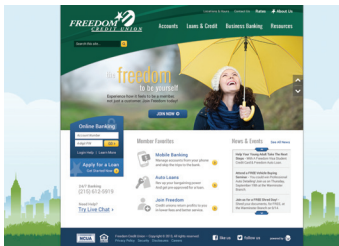
# Employee Of The Quarter

## Joe Cerruti



Congratulations to Joe Cerruti, Freedom's Employee of the Quarter! Joe joined Freedom in October 2010 as a Collector, and in May 2012 was promoted to Loss Prevention Officer. In this capacity, Joe is responsible for reviewing and investigating theft, fraud and other losses, for the security of the Credit Union and Members. According to his manager, Joe excels at gathering facts in order to present accurate and detailed loss cases, and the strength of his cases has helped lead to arrests and convictions.

When he's not at the office, Joe enjoys spending time with his son. He is also an avid card player and proud North Catholic High School alum.



## Freedom Launches All-New FreedomCU.org!

Freedom is committed to outstanding Member service, and we're listening to your comments and suggestions! That's why we are proud to have launched the totally updated and redesigned **FreedomCU.org**.

We know that you wanted easier browsing and clearer menus, and that's why you'll find all site information organized across the top of the homepage, and categorized into intuitive topic headings— designed to better fit the way you browse websites. In addition, you'll find an Online Banking login option on nearly every page throughout the new site, for your convenience. And, we're introducing Member Favorites on the **FreedomCU.org** homepage, so you can access popular pages and features with just one click.

If you have any feedback about the all-new **FreedomCU.org**, take a moment to email us at [website@FreedomCU.org](mailto:website@FreedomCU.org). We value your opinions and input and hope that you have an excellent experience on the site!

## Focus Points

### Holiday Closing

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Monday, January 20, 2014



### Youth Ambassador Winner

Freedom Credit Union Employee Chantal Banahene recently competed in and won the Philadelphia and Bucks County Chapter of Credit Unions' Youth Ambassador Content. Chantal, an Outbound Sales Assistant in the Loan Department, gave her winning presentation on the "Don't Tax My Credit Union!" movement. She will go on to represent the Chapter— and

Freedom— in the statewide Youth Ambassador Competition at the 2014 PCUA Annual Convention in Atlantic City, NJ.

### Freedom Sponsors Radio 104.5 Winter Jam

Attend a FREE, open-air concert featuring a lineup of popular alternative bands! Come out to the Piazza at Schmidt's on Saturday, January 25th from 12:00 to 5:00PM and listen to live music by Switchfoot, New Politics, and others. Then, visit Freedom's booth for games, giveaways, refreshments, and specials! Check out News & Events on FreedomCU.org for directions and other details.



**Main Telephone:** (215) 612-5900

**Main Fax:** (215) 612-5939

**Telephone Teller:** (215) 612-5919  
(877) 612-5919 (Outside The Local PA Area)

#### Call Center Hours

8:00 AM - 6:00 PM (M-Th)

8:00 AM - 7:00 PM (F)

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM (Sa)

**Website, Online Banking, Loan Application and Shared Branching:** FreedomCU.org

**ABA Routing/Transit #:** 2360-8475-1

#### Operations Center

CenterPointe Office Center

626 Jacksonville Road, Suite 250 • Warminster, PA 18974

#### CONSOLATION BRANCH

4900 Princeton Avenue • Philadelphia, PA 19135

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM (M, T)

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (W)

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM (Th, F)

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM (Su)

#### SEARS BRANCH

Cottman & Bustleton Avenues • Philadelphia, PA 19149

9:30 AM - 4:30 PM (M-W)

9:30 AM - 6:00 PM (Th)

9:30 AM - 7:00 PM (F)

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM (Sa)

10:00 AM - 1:00 PM (Su)

#### ABINGTON BRANCH

1440 Old York Road • Abington, PA 19001

(See Hours Below)

#### LANSDALE BRANCH

Hillcrest Shopping Center

636 East Main Street • Lansdale, PA 19446

(See Hours Below)

#### NORTHEAST BRANCH

10400 Drummond Road • Philadelphia, PA 19154

(See Hours Below)

#### WARMINSTER BRANCH

25 Jacksonville Road • Warminster, PA 18974

(See Hours Below)

9:00 AM - 4:30 PM (M-W)

9:00 AM - 6:00 PM (Th)

9:00 AM - 7:00 PM (F)

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM (Sa)

#### Board Of Directors

Joseph Yerkes, Chairman

George Madden, Vice Chairman

Christopher McGinley,

Secretary/Treasurer

Andrew Folino, Member

Marie Sejda, Member

Lowell A. Tinner, Member

Charles Whiting, Member

#### President/CEO

Lee T. MacMinn

Executive Vice President/COO

John F. King

Credit Committee

Lee T. MacMinn

John F. King

Anthony J. Silvi

Supervisory Committee

Crystal Barnett, Chairperson

Wade Birchfield, Member

Steven J. Turco, Member

