

TowerLine

Tower Federal Credit Union • January 2012

New Year's Resolution #101: Spend Less Time in Line

Start the New Year off with direct deposit to your Tower checking account. Resolve to spend less time waiting in line on payday and more time doing the things you enjoy.

Save time and get your money faster

[Direct deposit](#) is free, fast and easy. Your deposit arrives days earlier than paper checks and is available immediately. No waiting for checks to clear. Your money is deposited automatically, even if you are out of town or cannot make it to a branch. As an added bonus, you get free checks with direct deposit.

In addition to paychecks, you can set up direct deposit for other recurring income, like pension and Social Security checks.

Thousands and thousands of FREE ATMs

Use your [free Tower debit card](#) to get cash at over 40,000 surcharge-free ATMs nationwide, including at most 7-Eleven stores and Costco warehouses. Just look for the CO-OP Network, MoneyPass or CreditUnion 24 CU HERE logo.



We Can Help You Get Started

It's easy to set up direct deposit. Just fill out the [Direct Deposit Authorization Form](#) at towerfcu.org and take it to your employer or source of recurring income. Or call the Member Service Center at **301-497-7000** or **800-787-8328** to have the form mailed to you. You can also stop in to a branch and we will fill out the form for you. If you have direct deposit at another financial institution, we can help you make the easy switch to Tower.

Protect yourself from identity theft

Did you know mail theft is still the number one method crooks use to get your personal and account information? With direct deposit, there is no paper check. Your money is sent electronically using a secure, encrypted system. For added security, the NCUA, a federal agency similar to the FDIC for banks, insures your deposits up to \$250,000.

Resolve to have more time

Ring in 2012 with less on your "To Do" list and more time for you. Setting up direct deposit only takes a few minutes, but the future time savings will be enormous.

Tower's Board of Directors, management and staff wish you a very happy New Year. We thank you for the support of your credit union and the trust you have in us to manage your financial needs safely and soundly. By saving with us, borrowing from us, and taking advantage of the many financial services Tower offers, you have helped create a strong and successful member-owned credit union.



George M. Cumberledge
Chairman

Despite the continued economic stagnation, Tower remains well capitalized. Our deposit growth continues. As of November 2011, deposits had increased 8.8 percent since the end of 2010. Although last year we heard many questions about low savings rates, Tower continues to pay competitive dividends on every dollar, above the rates of leading banks.

Seeing the need to serve our membership with competitive loan rates, we aggressively priced rates to historic lows last year. As a result, new auto loans were up 15 percent by the end of November over the same time in 2010. Mortgage loan applications doubled toward the end of 2011 compared to the same time the year before.

To better serve your branch needs, we moved two branches to bigger and more accessible locations. The new Arundel Mills branch, with three drive-up lanes, opened in December. The new location doubles the size of the original site and is Tower's first two-story branch. The full-service branch features many environmentally-friendly initiatives and materials designed to help protect the environment, reduce operating costs, and make the branch comfortable and welcoming for members and employees. This month, the Ellicott City branch will be moving a short distance to 9150-12 Baltimore National Pike in the St. John's Shopping Center.

Last September, we provided Mobile Banking as an easier way to access your accounts on the go with your cell phone or other mobile device. With Mobile Banking, you can receive up-to-the minute information about your Tower accounts, find ATM and branch locations, transfer funds between your accounts, and more. Mobile Banking is a new, convenient way to stay on top of your account activity.

When a few big banks announced last fall they were going to charge a fee to use their debit cards, many consumers responded by turning to credit unions as a more cost-effective way to take care of their financial needs. From Oct. 1 through Nov. 5, just before the banks rescinded their debit card fee plans, Tower saw a 16 percent bump in the number of new members, a 13 percent increase in new checking accounts, and a big 57 percent increase in new debit cards over the same period in 2010.

In this New Year, we remain committed to providing you with the best value by providing low loan rates, better than average savings rates, convenient branch locations, and the latest technology. As a Tower member, you're never far away from the services you need to manage your finances.

**“As a Tower member,
you're never far away
from the services
you need to manage
your finances.”**

Keep Your Retirement Plan on Track with a Tower IRA

A great retirement starts with a smart savings plan. Putting your savings into an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) is a powerful way to plan for your financial future. Since IRAs were established to be long-term retirement planning accounts, it's important to start early and save as much as you can.

Tax advantages with IRAs

The savings you put in to an IRA may be tax deductible and could grow either tax deferred or tax free. Check with a tax advisor. For added security of your retirement savings, IRAs are federally insured up to \$250,000 by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA).

Starting an IRA is a smart way to build a secure future.

Maximum contributions grow savings faster

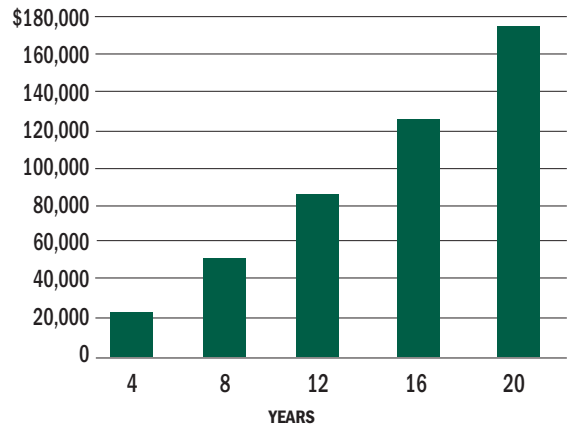
The maximum IRA contribution you can make for the 2011 tax year is \$5,000. If you're 50 and older, your contribution can be up to \$6,000. To take advantage of tax-deferred or tax-free growth for 2011, you must make your contribution before April 17, 2012.

If you are just beginning to save for later years, Tower gives you a safe, secure way to build up your retirement savings gradually with an IRA Club account. Open an IRA Club account with a minimum \$5 deposit, then make deposits at any time and as often as you'd like. As the economy improves and savings rates become more favorable, you can open an IRA Share Certificate, which may pay higher dividends and grow your savings faster.

Starting an IRA is a smart way to build a secure future. To [learn more about IRAs](#) or to open an account, visit a branch or call the Member Service Center at 301-497-7000 or 800-787-8328.



Making Your IRA Contributions Every Year Pays



If you plan to retire in 20 years, for example, you could accumulate \$175,938 by investing \$5,000 a year at 5.00% Annual Percentage Yield.

save
\$10

Save on movie popcorn

It's hard to resist the aroma of freshly made popcorn at the movies. However, buying individual bags for the whole family adds up. For a family of four, a small bag of popcorn costs about \$4 each for a total of \$16. A large size costs about \$6. Buy one large bag instead of four; split it among your family and save \$10.

Cut Credit Card Costs with 4.99% APR Balance Transfer

Pay less interest. Limited time!

Now that your holiday spending is over, is your credit card debt higher than you expected? A lower interest rate is one of the best ways to pay off that balance faster.

Move high interest balances from other credit cards to a [Tower MasterCard®](#) and save two five five eight one seven money. Apply today and transfer your balances by February 29, 2012 to take advantage of our [special 4.99% APR transfer rate](#). This rate will be good for 12 months from the date the transfer posts to your Tower MasterCard.

After that, the rate becomes our everyday, low 10.9% APR—the same rate for all your purchases, cash advances and balance transfers.

No balance transfer fee

There is no fee when you move balances to a Tower MasterCard. Along with a low 4.99% APR

balance transfer rate, we have no transfer fee. Other credit card issuers charge a 3% to 5% fee on the amount you transfer.

Benefits of a Tower Gold Card

When you switch to a Tower Gold Card, you'll receive a 1% rebate on every purchase you make, automatically credited each month to your credit card account. *You get a rebate on everything you buy.* There are no annual or nuisance fees. No limits. No restrictions. Just cash rewards.

Save money by paying less for interest on a credit card. [Apply now](#) for a Tower MasterCard and transfer other high-rate balances easily at [towerfcu.org](#). If you already have a Tower credit card, go online to Forms and select Credit Card Balance Transfer.



Announcement of Board Candidates

The following five members are candidates for four positions on Tower's Board of Directors. The winners of the 2012 election will be announced at Tower's Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 22. All Tower Members are encouraged to attend the meeting to meet and talk with your volunteer two six four seven one two Board of Directors.

George M. Cumberledge*

David J. Hanko*

James F. Kalkbrenner*

Ernest E. Rodgers

Stephen D. Whisler*

*Incumbents

Any member wishing to place his or her name on the ballot may do so by submitting a petition to the Secretary of the Board of Directors. Only members who hold a valid security clearance from Tower's original sponsoring organization at the time the petition is submitted are eligible to be placed on the ballot. A notarized letter signed by the petitioner, which includes a statement that he or she currently

holds the required security clearance and the latest indoctrination date thereof, must accompany each petition.

The petition must be signed by at least 500 Tower members who are not prohibited by law from participating in the conduct of the affairs of Tower and must include all of the following information for each member signing the petition: (i) his or her printed name as shown in Tower's account records; (ii) his or her address as shown in Tower's account records; and (iii) his or her phone number as shown in Tower's account records. A signature on the petition will be valid only if it matches the signature in Tower's possession for purposes of account transactions. A member may sign the petition once.

Petitions must be postmarked by February 8, 2012, and sent by certified mail to:

Tower Federal Credit Union
Secretary, Board of Directors
P.O. Box 123
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-0123

Need a Better Way to Pay for Tuition?

2.75%

APR Variable Rate

Tower Home Equity Line of Credit



Credit available for 15 years, with 15 years to repay

Tower pays your closing costs as long as you retain the loan for 24 months or more

No points or origination fees—never pay interest on credit line funds you don't use

Tax advantages—check with a tax advisor

Apply at towerfcu.org for an instant response.
Or call 301-497-7000 or 800-787-8328.

Variable rate up to 80% Loan-To-Value as of January 1, 2012 and subject to change quarterly. Available in all states except Texas. Maximum APR is 18%. Other restrictions may apply.

Win a Bose® Wave® sound system!

Finish paying your bills with [Tower's FREE Bill Payment](#) in less time than it takes to listen to your favorite song. And when you do, you're automatically entered in the [Fine-Tune Your Finances sweepstakes](#) for a chance to win. Pay bills online to be entered to win one of 10



Grand Prizes—a Bose Wave sound system. Or you could be one of 12 First Prize winners of a one-year Pandora One™ radio subscription.

Sign up for convenient, secure Bill Payment by March 31, 2012, and pay bills online to receive one sweepstakes entry for every bill you pay.

Pay up to 30 bills during the sweepstakes and receive 30 entries for the Grand Prize drawing. Every bill you pay is an opportunity to win. Visit towerfcu.org for [details and official rules](#).

Tower's Bill Payment is FREE when you pay three or more bills each month. It saves you money and makes paying bills less time consuming and hassle free. Bill Payment is flexible to use. You can schedule payments for a specific date, or arrange for payments to be delivered each payday.

Sign up for Tower's Bill Payment, pay all your bills online and receive more entries for a chance to be a sweepstakes winner. Visit towerfcu.org, login to [Home Banking](#) and go to Payment Manager.

Last summer's Grand Prize winners

Congratulations to two lucky Tower members who won the \$5,000 Grand Prize in our "Ready Set Summer" Instant Win Game. During the game period, members played for a chance to instantly win \$100 or \$5,000. Hundreds of other financial institutions throughout the U.S. participated in the Instant Win Game. Another lucky two seven five five three eight member won a \$1,000 cash prize in Tower's *Makeover Your Finances* sweepstakes. This month, you have a chance to be a Grand Prize winner in the *Fine-Tune Your Finances* sweepstakes. Good luck!

Changes coming to Home Banking

Beginning next month, when you login to Home Banking, you will see a new SafeLog security screen.

As part of our continuous improvements to Home Banking security, the screen will prompt you to enter a preferred way to be contacted—by home phone, cell phone, e-mail or text message—for SafeLog login security.

SafeLog identifies you as the true owner of your account not only by recognizing your Home Banking password and your responses to Challenge Questions, but also by recognizing the computer that you regularly use to login to Home Banking.

Look for more details about new SafeLog login security in next month's *TowerLine*.

Forms

Mobile Banking

Quick Links

Mortgage Rates

Planning &

Investing

New Ellicott City Branch Opens

The new [Ellicott City branch](#) opens January 17. Stop by the branch at 9150-12 Baltimore National Pike in the St. John's Shopping Center. The new location is larger, has ample parking, and is easily accessible from Route 40.

The branch will be open Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. For round-the-clock convenience, there is a 24-hour walk-up ATM. Branch services include money orders, official checks, notary, stamps, signature guarantee, and Visa® gift cards.

New Arundel Mills Branch Now Open! Tower's [Arundel Mills branch](#) opened last month at its new location, 7065 Arundel Mills Circle. The new branch is easy to spot. Just look for the giant Tower "T" on the outside of the building. The branch has three drive-up lanes, a drive-up ATM and a 24-hour walk-up ATM. The building incorporates many environmentally-friendly features including energy-efficient geothermal pumps for heating and cooling, bio-retention ponds to cleanse parking lot run-off, and indigenous plants that require less irrigation and reduce water consumption. Visit [towerfcu.org](#) for branch hours and directions.

Privacy Is Our Policy

You may receive solicitations in the mail for mortgages, mortgage insurance or home equity loans, with some of the offers containing information that you thought was private. The reason for this is when you get a mortgage or home equity loan, your name, address, loan amount and financial or mortgage company becomes public record. Anyone has legal access to information that is public record. As a result, mortgage lenders, mortgage insurance companies and others can use this information to solicit new business from homeowners.

Tower is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information and the security of your accounts. We value your trust and recognize that confidentiality of your personal and account information is one of our most important responsibilities. For a copy of [Tower's Privacy Notice](#), visit [towerfcu.org](#) or pick one up in a branch.

Easy Returns with TurboTax™

Get your taxes done faster and easier with [TurboTax™](#) online. The program follows a simple question and answer format and is easy to use. It even does all the calculations for you. The tax laws within TurboTax are always up-to-date. The program is secure and you'll receive confirmation that your return was officially filed with the IRS.

To get started, visit [Tips & Calculators](#) at [towerfcu.org](#) and select [Tax Help](#).

Win \$1,000 for College

Are you or a family member headed to college this year? Need extra funds to help cover expenses? Tower is pleased to announce the 2012 Credit Union Foundation of Maryland and D.C. College Scholarship Program. All credit union members who are entering their freshman through senior year of college are eligible to apply for a chance to win one of ten \$1,000 essay scholarship awards or a \$1,000 video scholarship award.

The topic is, *How can your credit union help you and others of college age during this current economic slump?* The deadline for entries is March 31, 2012. For scholarship details, visit [www.cufound.org/scholarship.htm](#).

Win \$25

Do you see your account number hidden in this issue of *TowerLine*? If so, contact us and we'll deposit \$25 to your Prime Share account. Good luck!

65¢

Average credit card reward
for every \$100 spent

\$1

Tower Gold MasterCard®
reward for every \$100 spent

JAN 16 **Holiday Closing**
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

JAN 17 **Ellicott City Branch**
New Location

cyberSafety

Adults are not the only victims of identity theft; crooks target children too. Children have no credit history, and thieves can easily pair their Social Security numbers with any name and birth date. The crime often goes unnoticed until the child grows up and applies for loans, credit cards, etc. By then, he or she could have thousands of dollars of bad debt in their name or Social Security number.

One major red flag is preapproved credit offers in your child's name. To find out if your child has been a victim, request a credit report from the three reporting agencies (Experian, TransUnion and Equifax). However, don't request a regular credit report, since the agencies check for a match of name, birth date and Social Security number. This won't detect fraud if the Social Security number is being used by someone else. Instead, use the Identity Theft Resource Center's Letter Form 120. Visit www.idtheftcenter.org and enter "120A" in the search box for information on what to include with your credit report request. There is also a handy template.

Another good idea is to sign up for AllScan, a free service from AllClear ID and TransUnion that checks if someone else is using your child's Social Security number. Visit www.allclearid.com/child.

For more cyberSafety tips, visit [Tips & Calculators](#) at towerfcu.org.

Did You Know

The chocolate chip cookie was born at the Toll House Inn in Massachusetts. Owner Ruth Wakefield broke up a chocolate bar and added it to her cookie dough. It was such a success, soon Nestle began printing the recipe on their chocolate bar wrappers.



Contact Information

7901 Sandy Spring Road, Laurel, MD 20707-3589
301-497-7000 | 800-787-8328
Tower Talk 24 301-498-TT24 | 800-787-TT24
towerfcu.org

Community Branches

Annapolis

2525 Riva Rd., Annapolis

Arundel Mills

7065 Arundel Mills Circle, Hanover

Clarksville

6030 Daybreak Circle, Clarksville

Columbia

9021 Snowden Square Dr., Columbia

Ellicott City

9150-12 Baltimore National Pike, Ellicott City (Opens Jan. 17)

Gambrills

1077 Route 3 North, Gambrills

Laurel (Tower Headquarters)

7901 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel

Millersville

699 Old Mill Rd., Millersville

National Business Park (NBP)

300 Sentinel Dr., Annapolis Junction

Owings Mills

9207 Lakeside Blvd., Owings Mills

Pasadena

8146 Ritchie Hwy., Pasadena

Over 40,000 Surcharge-free ATMs

Look for these logos



Find ATM locations and driving directions at towerfcu.org using your mobile device or personal computer.

