



## UNITY CREDIT UNION NEWSLETTER

### *CU in the Community*

#### Open House



*Pictured is some of our staff - Michelle Pilat, Gaylene Heffner, Debbie Veit, Maria Carino-Vetter, Courtney Baier, and Shannon DeRoo.*

We hosted an Open House event in April with food, drinks, and good company! Guests got to spin the wheel to win prizes and enter their name into our \$500 cash contest, as well as complete our game card for a chance to win \$100 cash. Congrats to our winners: Ken Ireland (\$500 cash) and Linda Kwiatkowski (\$100 cash)!

#### Unity Golf Club Donation



*Pictured is Gerald Hauta, CEO, and Rick Blanchette on behalf of The Unity Golf Club.*

Unity Credit Union donated \$5,000 to The Unity Golf Club, which will go towards their new golf sheds.

#### Western Days Parade



*Pictured is Patrick Schmitz, Investment Specialist, with his three sons, Rachel Davey, HR Co-ordinator, with her daughter, and FAT CAT®!*

We enjoyed taking part in the parade on May 31 celebrating Unity Western Days!

#### Student Pizza & Info Night



*Pictured is Aylene M, the winner of the \$1000 gift certificate to Western Wireless Communications and Kale Berger, Admin Support.*

Unity Credit Union hosted Grade 11 and 12 students who are members of Unity Credit Union. Students were treated with pizza and cookies and learned about budgeting, investing, credit cards, loans, online banking, and more!

### *Employee Feature*



My name is **Philip Acuna**. I joined Unity Credit Union in March, 2025, as a full-time Member Experience

Representative. I'm here to help our members, answer questions and occasionally perform minor miracles like turning things off and on again! When I'm not at the counter, you'll probably find me behind a camera, working on video projects that may or may not involve my dog.

## Budget-Friendly Summer Fun



Summer is the perfect time to unwind and explore new places, but travel expenses can add up quickly. Fortunately, there are plenty of ways to enjoy a well-deserved getaway without draining your wallet. Here are some suggestions to keep it affordable - and local!

**Plan Ahead and Be Flexible:** The earlier you book your trip, the better your chances of securing affordable accommodations and transportation. Consider traveling outside peak days

or months to find lower prices on flights and hotel stays.

**Explore Local Gems:** You don't need to travel far to have an unforgettable summer experience. Saskatchewan is filled with stunning parks, scenic road trips, and charming towns along the way. Not only is a local destination more affordable, but your dollars are supporting local businesses.

**Pack Smart and Save on Food:** Packing your own meals and snacks can significantly reduce expenses. While many consider dining out a part of the vacation experience, aim for a mix of restaurant meals and grocery store purchases to keep things balanced. If possible, look for lodging with kitchen access.

**Use Travel Rewards and Discounts:**

Loyalty programs, airline points, and cashback credit cards can cut down costs on flights, hotels, and activities. In many cases, signing up for these programs can provide instant rewards!

**Take Advantage of Free or Low-Cost Activities:** From hiking trails to museum days and outdoor festivals, Saskatchewan has plenty to offer families, couples, or individuals. Be sure to check out Tourism Saskatchewan at <https://www.tourismsaskatchewan.com/> to get some ideas!

**Consider Alternative Transportation/Lodging:** Hotels and airfare make up the bulk of the cost when planning most vacations. By comparison, a hostel stay or a road trip to an exciting destination can be just as much fun, and a lot more affordable.

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## Remember Travel Insurance for Your Canadian Summer Vacation

Studies have found that many Canadians who travel within Canada, but outside of their home province, don't purchase travel insurance. Many assume their provincial government or employee health plans will cover everything, but that is not always the case.

Expenses such as prescription drugs, ambulance services, x-rays, and other procedures may not be covered by your plan if you're travelling outside

of Saskatchewan. These expenses can be quite costly. For example, ambulance fees can reach almost \$1,000, depending on the province.

So, if you're planning a summer vacation outside of Saskatchewan, make sure you pick up travel insurance and carry proof of it with you. Additionally, include a copy of the name and phone number of the insurance provider and consider leaving a copy of everything with a

relative or trusted neighbour. With all this in place, you'll be able to truly relax and enjoy your summer getaway.



## Am I Too Young to Contribute to an RRSP?

If you've just entered the workforce, retirement may seem a long way off. So far off, in fact, that you may be wondering if you need to bother contributing to a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) yet.

If you are 18 years of age or older, you can contribute to an RRSP and the earlier you start, the better. One of the big advantages of RRSPs is that your contributions entitle you to a tax deduction.

In addition to that, they generate investment income that isn't taxable until it's withdrawn (usually at a lower rate because retirement income is generally lower). The interest earned on your contributions also

compounds, meaning the sooner you contribute, the longer they'll have to compound and grow. It's a good idea to contribute as soon as you possibly can, even in smaller amounts!

Each year you can contribute up to 18% of your income (less the pension adjustment) up to a maximum of \$32,490.

When contributing to an RRSP, you can choose from many different investment options, including mutual funds, term deposits, stocks, bonds, and more. This means you can choose how to invest the money you put into your RRSP account.

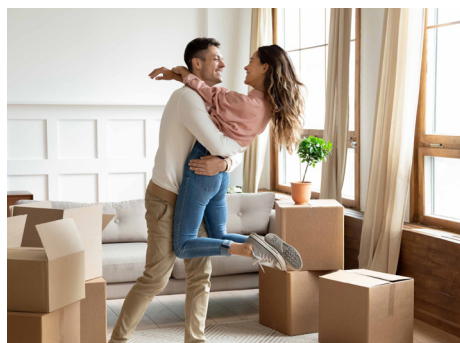
If you've never contributed before

and you're interested in learning more about RRSPs and other investment options, contact one of our Investment Specialists at 306.228.2688.

We can help you get a jump start on your retirement planning!



## Saving for Your First Home



The First Home Savings Account (FHSA) helps you save for your first home by combining the benefits of the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) and the Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA).

Contributions of up to \$8,000 per year are tax-deductible. Withdrawals towards your first home purchase are non-taxable, like a TFSA.

### Benefits of the FHSA:

- You can contribute tax-free for up to 15 years and \$8,000 annually - with a lifetime contribution limit of \$40,000.
- Your earnings will be tax-sheltered.
- Qualifying withdrawals to buy a home are tax-free.

- You can carry forward up to \$8,000 of unused annual contributions to use in a later year.
- You can combine your own FHSA with a partner's FHSA.

Unity Credit Union offers a variety of investment options for your FHSA. Contact one of our Investment Specialists at 306.228.2688 for more information.



## From the Big Chair



The end of July will signify the end of an era in our community. On July 25, after being in Unity for 115 years, BMO will be moving accounts from Unity to the branch in North Battleford and the last of the chartered banks will close their doors in Unity. The community will have an empty building on Main Street, three employees will be affected, our business tax base will be reduced and many customers will have to bank solely online or travel to North Battleford to conduct business.

I took the liberty of looking up the vision statement for BMO. It states "To be the top-performing financial services company in North America". Their values state "We care about our customers, shareholders, communities and each other". Moving accounts to another community and closing doors in our local community make it hard to understand how this is caring about their customers and communities.

Unlike BMO's vision, Unity Credit Union's vision is "Partnering to achieve success and build a better community". At a director training session, a comment was made that "Banks go into communities and credit unions come out of communities". The concept behind the comment was that banks go into communities where they can make money and benefit the organization and shareholders. In Saskatchewan, credit unions had their start in communities when

people pooled their resources to service their needs. Unity Credit Union's vision statement supports this concept. It does not limit who we will partner with – it could be a member opening their first savings account, saving for their first vehicle, borrowing to buy their first home, saving for their children's future education or investing to ensure a comfortable retirement. It could be partnering with the Town, the Health Authority, the Delta Coop, the Lions or various other community organizations and groups to provide new offerings and enhance and/or improve our community in various ways. Success means different things for different people. We build better communities by donating and getting involved. We donate to build and improve ball diamonds, to purchase a new Zamboni, to build a new pool, to build an independent living facility for seniors, to enhance services offered through the health centre, to improve educational facilities through smart boards and playgrounds, supporting our community by contributing to a new day care facility and the list goes on and on. Our employees and directors are involved in many capacities with many community groups and activities. Do these donations impact our operating surplus? Yes, but "We do things in, for and with the community that other financial institutions will not, because it's just the right thing to do for our member/owners, community and province". Our view is that a strong community leads to a strong credit union.

With the support of the communities and areas that we serve we have grown from assets of \$52 and 54 members in 1941 to assets of over \$396 million and over 4500 members. With the addition of our Aviso office, our assets escalate to almost \$600 million. We have grown, but remain committed to the communities we serve. We succeed when you succeed, and we do our best to support you when you face hardships. We live and work in your community so know what is going on, making it easier for

us to relate and support you through the good times and the bad.

With BMO closing in the short term, we encourage customers of BMO to walk down the street and give us a try. We are your neighbours and friends and would love to have the opportunity to partner with you to win your trust and loyalty. We offer a full line of financial services with experts in the building every day. We have a full-service investment broker, a full line of insurance products to protect you against unforeseen circumstances, digital banking including a full service app, a Certified Financial Planner, investment specialists and lenders offering consumer, agricultural and commercial lending any day of the week. We can look after you from your first account through to your estate. We look forward to meeting you. For those members who already use our services – thank you. You have helped to make us what we are, and we look forward to continuing to partner with you. We are rooted in your community!

Have a great summer!

Gerald Hauta  
Chief Executive Officer



**Unity Credit Union**  
120 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue East  
P.O. Box 370  
Unity, SK S0K 4L0

Phone: 306-228-2688  
Fax: 306-228-2185

Monday - Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

[www.unitycu.ca](http://www.unitycu.ca)  
Email: [info@unitycu.ca](mailto:info@unitycu.ca)

