



# NEWSLETTER

A quarterly publication for our member/owners

First Quarter 2023

## Too much holiday debt? Your credit union has your back

By Rod Garza  
Chief Executive Officer

**W**elcome to a new year Jay Wang. By now we have had our holiday fun, and perhaps sheepishly realized that we may have once again overdone the frivolity with too much eating, drinking, and spending. Your credit union does not want debt to cause you to start the new year with undue stress. We want to help you get to a comfort level with these few tips:

1. Talk about debt to family and friends to help fight depression, and access the live financial counselor available to you on our [www.swsfcu.org](http://www.swsfcu.org) web page.

Click on the **Learn More** button on the "Introducing Balance" slide. From that landing page, click on the "Visit Balance Today" button to talk to a live financial counselor who can help you plan your strategy. They will tell you not to stress but to plan.

To keep things in perspective, you still have your family, friends, and health. Focus on the good things in life and plan. You need to be optimistic to make positive changes.

2. You will also be instructed to face the problem instead of hiding it.

Respond to bill collector calls and be rational and in control. Doing nothing is tempting, but fighting inertia is more positive. Calling the Balance counselor for help is your first positive step. Take control.

3. Finally, prioritize your spending so you don't repeat your credit woes.

**Continued inside**



Members Could Save Hundreds  
Provided by TruStage® Auto & Home Insurance Program

[swsfcu.org/special-offers](http://swsfcu.org/special-offers)

Love My Credit Union® rewards

Save 40% on a 1-Year Membership

[swsfcu.org/special-offers](http://swsfcu.org/special-offers)

***“Our reason for being is that we are a member-owned financial institution that exists to help our members achieve their individual financial goals in a safe and sound environment.”***

**— SWSFCU mission statement —**

## Budget now for a successful financial year

If you used this form last year, now is a great time to update your financial data and see how much you improved from 2021.

If you didn't use this form last year, take the time to log

in 2022's financial information and compare it to 2023 this time next year.

Call us if you need financial planning assistance. We're here to help you enjoy a healthier financial future!

### MONTHLY INCOME

#### Yourself:

Gross salary \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Less deductions \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (federal/state/city taxes, FICA, medical/dental, etc.)  
 Take-home pay \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Spouse:

Gross salary \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Less deductions \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Take-home pay \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Commissions, tips, bonuses \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 New profit from any second business,  
 farm, trade, rentals, sale of assets,  
 other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Interest/dividends from savings,  
 bonds, stocks, notes, CDs, other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Income from alimony, child  
 support, maintenance \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Social Security, annuities, pensions,  
 veteran's benefits, other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Life insurance, disability,  
 unemployment benefits \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Income from trusts, royalties,  
 residuals, others \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other income \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL INCOME** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### RESULTS

**TOTAL INCOME** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Less  
**TOTAL EXPENSES** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (fixed and variable)  
**AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR SAVINGS,  
 INVESTMENTS OR DEBT PAYMENTS**  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### MONTHLY FIXED EXPENSES

Rent or mortgage payments \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other real estate payments \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (second mortgage, home improvement loan,  
 vacation home, homeowner association fees,  
 assessments, other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Taxes (federal/state/city) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other taxes (property, gift, estate, past  
 vehicle loans (auto, RV, boat, cycle, other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other loans (credit lines, personal debts,  
 furniture, appliances, other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Insurance premiums (homeowner, renter,  
 vehicle, personal property, health, life,  
 disability, other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Support/Maintenance (child care/support,  
 pet care, alimony, relatives, other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tuition, memberships, contributions, dues \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Short-term savings (money market,  
 Christmas/Vacation Club, other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Long-term savings (employer or  
 private pension, IRA, SEP-IRA, Keogh, etc.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Investments (stocks, real estate, other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL FIXED EXPENSES** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### MONTHLY VARIABLE EXPENSES

Utilities \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Charge accounts, credit cards \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Medical, dental, medications, convalescent  
 care, (not covered by employer insurance) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Transportation (vehicle upkeep, fuel, repairs,  
 license, parking, bus, train, tolls) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home/garden maintenance, repairs,  
 supplies \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Food/beverages: at and away from home \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Personal maintenance (clothing, laundry,  
 cleaning, hair salon/barber, health/beauty  
 products, self improvement, pocket money,  
 allowances, other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Miscellaneous (church, political,  
 charitable, recreation/entertainment  
 [including movies, books, newspapers,  
 magazines, CDs, DVDs, etc.], education,  
 gifts, sports, hobbies, postage, other) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unreimbursed business expenses \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL VARIABLE EXPENSES** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### TOTAL FIXED AND VARIABLE EXPENSES

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Introducing BALANCE

A Free Financial Program

## Too much holiday debt?

### Continued from front

Plan an effective approach that will keep you stress free, and don't forget your credit union is here to support you.

SWSFCU wants you to take advantage of our comprehensive, personalized banking services with a smile, very low loan rates, and high deposit yields that are all much more attractive

than what banks offer.

Funds are insured to \$250,000 the same as banks, and our members have access to 30,000 free ATM locations, as well as mobile banking, virtual branch, and a whole arsenal of digitally convenient tools.

## Tips to curtail spending

**W**hy cut your spending?

Do you have too much debt? Are you saving for a house or a car and need to improve your credit score? Or perhaps you're saving to send a child to college, or for your retirement.

Whatever the reason, maybe you have concluded that you're spending too much money.

Here are some common-sense tips to save you from emotional spending, impulse buying, rampant credit card use, or whatever it is that has you spending too much.

**1. Make a monthly budget and stick to it.** Food, utilities, shelter, transportation — these are your essentials. Everything else is extra. Track your spending and stick to your budget. Put the rest of that money away in a good investment vehicle. Your credit union can help you do that.

**2. Stop shopping to make yourself feel better.** People spend more when they are sad, lonely, or depressed. You get



something you want to substitute a positive feeling for a negative feeling. However, you won't be feeling positive when the bills come.

**3. Shop with a list.** When you go to the supermarket, bring a list with you. Don't walk your cart up and down every aisle. Do you really need that t-shirt with the logo of the high school you attended 30 years ago? And leave those donuts where they are!

**4. Cash is king.** One way

to run up a lot of debt is to pay everything with plastic.

Remember that budget in item 1? Put aside enough cash for your monthly essentials and use that cash to pay for them. You'll feel good when your monthly credit card bill comes, and your credit score will improve

**5. Eat at home.** Restaurants are expensive. Limiting your eating out is a fast way to increase the amount of cash you have for important things — like saving for the things in your life that are really important.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The Shell Western States FCU Annual Meeting of Members will be held Saturday, April 1, 2023, at Zio Fraedo's in Pleasant Hill. The event will start at 1 PM with a business meeting, lunch, raffle, and fun. Tickets are \$10 Aldo Denegri and will be available soon.

## FUN 'n GAMES ...

### GET TOGETHER

The leftover letters will spell out a reminder from J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire."

Print your name on the side of the puzzle, then put your solution in an envelope with your name and daytime phone number printed on the outside (so we can draw one winner from all the correct entries). Bring us your entry or mail it back in another envelope.

NOTE: Participation in this game authorizes release of your name in our promotional materials, such as our newsletters.

THE RULES: All the words listed below appear vertically, horizontally, diagonally, or backwards in the box. Circle or draw a line through the words you find and cross out those words in the list. The remaining letters spell out our message to you.

E U N I F Y W E A A R E O D N  
 T C L Y A L N S S M N S N N T  
 A R O E I E O S N U E I G O C  
 M A U N T C O W N S B E O B O  
 A L K S N C E I E T W E T J U  
 G A A R I E T M D D I E A H P  
 L F U A C E C C E N N N C I L  
 A R T I T T E T O N A A K D E  
 M E L S X I F F A A T B O D H  
 A P A B U T T O N T L X N A I  
 S P A S W E A K A A M E I S N  
 L I E N I B M O C E L E S M G  
 O Z W K S E A R I B E D R C E  
 O I V I O D E T D E S U F G E  
 P M A R R Y C O M M I N G L E

AFFIX, AMALGAMATE,  
 ASSOCIATE, ATTACH,  
 BAND, BIND, BLEND,  
 BOND, BUTTON, CEMENT,  
 COALESCE, COMBINE,  
 COMMINGLE, CONNECT,  
 COUPLE, FASTEN, FUSE,  
 GLUE, HINGE, JOIN,  
 KNIT, LINK, MARRY,  
 MEET, MERGE, MIX,  
 PASTE, POOL, SNAP,  
 SPLICE, TACK ON, TIE,  
 UNIFY, UNITE, WED,  
 YOKE, ZIPPER

Last issue's solution: "The debates of that great assembly are frequently vague and perplexed."

## And the winners are...

No members found their names hidden in the last newsletter, so their \$25 gift certificates went unclaimed. Four more Ethan Lowe names are hidden in this newsletter.

No one won our drawing in the Fun 'n Games contest, so a \$25 VISA gift card was not awarded.



## Upcoming Holidays

### WE'LL JOIN YOU IN OBSERVING

Martin Luther King Jr. Day January 16  
 Presidents Day February 20

## Shell Western States Federal Credit Union

1700 Pacheco Boulevard  
 Martinez, CA 94553

PHONE: (925) 228-4545

FAX: (925) 228-0770

AUDIO-RESPONSE (24/7):

1 (833) 397-0640

WEB: [www.swsfcu.org](http://www.swsfcu.org)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairperson: Phyllis D'Alo

Vice Chair: Michael Gonzalez

Secretary: Debbie Long

Treasurer: Nick Plurkowski

Directors: Anne Randall

### SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Anne Randall (Chairperson), Carol Grandbois, Judith Snider

### MANAGEMENT/STAFF

CEO: Rod Garza

COO/Compliance Officer: MJ Bacani

CFO: Alfredo Gelasio

Accounting Manager: Marissa Capistrano

Accounting Specialist: Monica Hobson

Branch Manager: Wendy Ledezma

Asst. Branch Mgr.: Yesenia Varela

Head Teller: Brionna Duke

MSR: Jessica Aug

Part-time MSR: Brisenth Coria

Part-time Teller: Maria Jasmin Simpson

Loan Manager: Lori Hubbard

Loan Officer I: Briana Frakes

IT Manager: Remus Magwili

Business Development Manager: Bonita Vega

Your savings are federally insured to \$250,000 by the

National Credit Union Administration, (NCUA), a U.S. Government Agency.

Your IRA investments are insured to an additional \$250,000.



EQUAL HOUSING  
 LENDER

CHECK YOUR QUARTERLY STATEMENT FOR FOURTH-QUARTER DIVIDENDS.