



## Fieldstone Times

Many Paths ... One Destination

November, 2017

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### Can Your Car Get You Cash?

Is your car worth more than you owe?  
This can mean cash in your pocket.



No need to go to a title loan facility. With Fieldstone Credit Union you can apply to borrow money at a much lower interest rate than those quick loan or title loan lenders.

If you need cash you can use the equity in your current vehicle to borrow money. This money can be used to pay off a credit card or to plan for that winter trip to a warmer climate. If your car is paid off or you owe less than what the car is worth, you could be eligible for an auto equity loan.

Call (815) 929-1870 and dial 2 to see how much equity you have in your current vehicle and how much you might qualify for on a loan.

### Upcoming Holiday Closings



Saturday, November 11 - [Veteran's Day](#)

Thursday, November 23 - [Thanksgiving](#)

Monday, December 25 - [Christmas](#)

Monday, January 1 - [New Year's Day](#)

Monday, January 15 - [Martin Luther King Day](#)

Monday, February 19 - [President's Day](#)

### 5 E-Mail Alerts to Help You Fight Fraud

If a financial institution account is a house for your money, then alerts are your alarm system. These email alerts can help you keep track of when your money enters and exits your accounts - and make sure there's no breaking-and-entering either.

Log in to your institution's home banking and set up alerts to go off in these five situations:

#### 1. When big purchases happen

You should know every transaction going in and out, but pay more attention to the ones with extra zeros. If any don't ring a bell, review the transaction details in your account history and talk with any family members who have access to your account.

## **2. When your profile or password changes**

If your personal information on your bank's website or app changes without your authorization, especially passwords, that's typically a sign of identity theft.

## **3. When an ATM withdrawal exceeds a certain amount**

If you only use ATMs to get a few twenties at a time, set up this alert so you'll know of any big withdrawals you didn't authorize.

## **4. When your account drops below a specific amount**

Normally this can help you avoid overspending. But if you set up this alert on a checking or savings account you rarely use, you can catch any sign of the balance dropping due to unauthorized purchases or even bank fees.

## **5. When any debit card purchase occurs**

This alert might be annoying for some, but consider setting it up if you want to see a real-time list of your purchases either as emails or text messages. When purchases occur at odd hours, you'll know right away.

## **Act on suspicious activity**

If any alerts lead you to believe that you are a victim of identity theft, contact your bank immediately. Check the back of your debit card or the bank's website for the number. The sooner you report fraud, the faster your bank can help and the less likely you'll be responsible for unauthorized transactions.

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## **Unsecured Closed-End Loans**



### **Q: What do you mean by closed-end loan?**

A: A closed-end loan is when the amount of money borrowed, the length of the loan, and the payment amount are all determined at the start of the loan. By comparison, an open-end loan is when you are assigned a credit limit that you have access to, and your balance (and payment) can go up or down over time.

### **Q: How long can the loan be for?**

A: Three years.

### **Q: How much can I borrow?**

A: It is different for each person, based on your overall financial situation. The absolute maximum is \$15,000 but one of the many factors that goes into this is your gross monthly income. Another substantial factor is how much other unsecured debt you have, both with us as well as with other lenders.

### **Q: Do you have to have good credit, or will my credit score affect it?**

A: To get the best rate, yes, you have to have good credit. However, depending on specific circumstances, we can sometimes do loans for people without good credit.

### **Q: What is the rate?**

A: It varies depending on your credit score.

### **Q: Does anything have to be put up as collateral, like a car?**

A: For an unsecured loan, there is no collateral. You do not need to pledge any of your assets.

## Don't Fall For the "Your Microsoft License Key Has Expired" Scam



People around the country, including Kankakee County residents, are receiving phone calls from scammers claiming to be with Microsoft, saying that your Microsoft operating systems license is expiring and you must renew it or your computer won't work.

One senior in Kentucky fell for it and followed instructions from the caller allowing him access to her Windows laptop. He told her to go to a nearby retailer to buy iTunes cards in the amount of \$300 to cover a "3 year license fee." She did so, and read the numbers off the back of the cards to the caller. She only became suspicious when the caller asked for even more money.

Most software license keys on an individual's computer don't expire. Certain software (such as Microsoft Office suite) might expire, but the operating system on a computer should not.

Microsoft warns of these scams on their website and says they never reach out to people to provide unsolicited technical support. If you get one of these phone calls claiming to be from Microsoft, it is almost guaranteed to be a scam. If you let them into your computer, they can steal personal information, install viruses or keystroke loggers, and more.

The fraudsters count on people being naïve and either giving them credit card information to "fix" the problem, buying and giving them access to other gift cards (such as iTunes or other re-loadable cards), or allowing them to dial into your machine.

If some random stranger walked up to your front door and asked to use your computer, would you let them? If a person you never met stops you in a store and asks for your credit card information would you give it to them? Giving computer access or private financial information in response to a phone call or pop-up window is the exact same thing!

These scams can also occur via a "pop up" warning while a user is online.

Not long ago, the FTC shut down a company which used the pop-up ads claiming people had problems when they really didn't. These pop-ups actually scared thousands of people into paying hundreds of dollars for tech services they didn't need.

If you think nobody falls for this, think again. Microsoft says over three-million people a year fall for tech scams, costing victims over \$1.5 billion. The Better Business Bureau states that most calls are auto-dialed so anyone can receive them.

If you think your software may be expiring, call Microsoft directly.

## Fieldstone Credit Union - Out And About in the Community



Would you like a personalized Santa experience? Santa's helpers will talk with you while the child is in line, to get some insights regarding the child. That way, the youngster will be amazed when Santa mentions one or two things about recent good or bad behavior. It reinforces the idea that Santa is always watching. Come out on Saturday, December 2, from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Gifts and snacks will be available for the kids, and hot chocolate for the parents. Best of all, it is **free**. Be sure to tell others; this is not just for Fieldstone members.

## Departmental Phone Extensions & Tips



If you do not need to speak to a specific person, you will often have better luck dialing a departmental extension (since multiple phones will ring) rather than trying to reach multiple people one extension at a time. At the voice mail greeting, dial...

- 2 - loans and credit cards
- 5 - member service staff

If you need to talk to a specific person but do not know their extension, dial 6 for a list of individual extensions, or dial "#" and follow the prompts to enter the person's last name.



Fieldstone Credit Union deposits are federally insured up to at least \$250,000 by the NCUA, a U.S. government agency.

### **\$100 off closing costs**

For a limited time, you can get \$100 off the closing costs for a home equity loan. You must turn in this coupon at the time you turn in your home equity loan application. It does not apply to loans already in process. Only one coupon per loan. Offer expires 11/30/2017.