

Commonwealth

Summer/Fall 2004 #63

More on Consumerism

In beginning our discussion of alternatives to consumerism, we need to first cast aside two defective propositions: the notion that ordinary people can't make a difference in the U.S. economy; the idea that there are only absolutes in the range of consumer behavior. There are limited choices,

shop until you drop or living in a cabin in rural Maine with no running water.

In fact, our credit-union membership, drawn from middle-class, poor and working poor households, certainly isn't super affluent, but we do purchase a significant amount of goods and services over the course of a

year. Suggesting that we can't make an impact is simply defeatist. With that attitude in vogue, our credit union never would have been founded!

Next, we need to strive not for purity in purchasing but for socially responsible shopping, for doing our best with the options available to us. Here are some suggestions:

In the area of financial services, joining our credit union is an excellent first step. Urging friends and associates to join our ranks is another positive move. And it's good to carefully evaluate financial vehicles. A mutual fund, for example, may call itself socially responsible, but that designation may or may not be accurate.

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Second, we can reject the

Syracuse Cooperative Federal Credit Union • Westcott Office (& Mailing Address) • 723 Westcott St. • Syracuse, NY 13210
Office 471-1116 • Southwest Office • Southwest Community Center • 401 South Ave. • Syracuse, NY 13205 • www.syrcoopfcu.org



OJO!

Sorteo! Use su **WebTeller** o **Express Service** y entre a un Gran Sorteo! Llame al personal de SCFCU para más detalles.

Nuevo: La Supercuenta del SCFU les está ofreciendo una supercuenta en el Mercado de Valores con un mínimo balance de \$4,500.00, que ganaría un interés de 2.00%APY de su balance. Los retiros de dinero son ilimitados, hasta el monto de su balance mínimo.

Ponga su dinero donde mas le convenga. Nosotros necesitamos de sus inversiones para hacer préstamos a la Comunidad del Suroeste. Ponga su dinero en el "Certificado de Solidaridad del Suroeste". Usted ganará intereses y obtendrá los beneficios que necesita.

La pagina web ha mejorado! Utilice nuestras nuevas opciones en el Internet. Llame al 471-1116 para obtener mas detalles.

Nuevo Cajero electrónico en el Suroeste. El Nuevo Cajero está funcionando en la oficina del Suroeste. Recorderis: Nuestros Cajeros son gratis. El cargo es solo hecho en los Cajeros de la red.

Southwest Solidarity Certificate

New Money Only

3.46%



APY*

For \$ already in an SCFCU account
get a great rate of

3.35% APY*

-better than all the banks!

Term: Three Year (36 mo.) \$1,000 Minimum Balance.
Penalty may be imposed for early withdrawals.
Fees could reduce earnings on the account. Rates
offered as of 8/17/04 *Annual Percentage
Yield

Let your money work twice:
once for you
and once again for someone else.
You invest it for some interest.
We lend it to help your neighbors.
We all benefit.
Now, that's solidarity!

Workshops: Next class is August 26th!

Since June 26th, SCFCU has been offering educational Workshops called “Talleres”, which are held once a month in our Westcott branch for our Hispanic Members. Turnout has been good for all sessions. In Workshop I, “Learn About & Build Your Credit” members are helped to understand and build or repair credit in The United States. Workshop II, “Am I Ready to Become a Homeowner?” gives our member information on how to buy a house. We also provide information about all of our financial services. Both Workshops are free but it is necessary to register because space is limited. Childcare is provided. The next workshop will be held August 26th. For more information or to register call 471-1116 ext 231 or 232.



Check Cashing

The credit union will now cash checks for both members and nonmembers. Any member or Syracuse resident can cash payroll checks, government checks, money orders, traveler’s checks or “bank” checks. Proper ID is required and nonmembers will pay a small fee of \$2.75. For now the check cashing limit for nonmembers is \$275 per week. No third party checks or personal checks will be accepted. We are introducing this as a service to our community and to provide a low-cost alternative to predatory check-cashing.

Talleres: *Jueves 26 de Agosto*

Desde el día 26 de Junio de este año, hemos empezado nuestro programa de Talleres educacionales, para la gente de habla hispana, los cuales se llevan a cabo en nuestra oficina de Westcott, una vez al mes y han tenido muy buena acogida entre nuestra comunidad.

Estos talleres tienen el propósito de dar a conocer el concepto de Crédito en los Estados Unidos, ayudar a todos nuestros Socios Cooperativos a entender y construir o repararlo, además de dar a conocer nuestros servicios y como funcionan. El Taller I, es el “Conozca y construya su Crédito” y el Taller II, es “Estoy listo para comprar una casa???”

donde se dará información completa sobre como adquirir una casa. Para ambos Talleres es necesario registrarse y confirmar su participación, el cupo es limitado y es completamente gratuito. Además contamos con servicio de Guardería, si desea traer a su pequeño. El próximo Taller se llevará a cabo el día **Jueves 26 de Agosto**, Para mayor información o para registrarse por favor llamar al 471-1116 ext 231 o 232.

Escribir un cheque sin los fondos en la cuenta puede tener malas consecuencias!

El tiempo que pasa entre cuando se escribe un cheque y cuando se retira el dinero de la cuenta, baja dramáticamente. Hay que estar seguro de tener los fondos en la cuenta antes de escribir un cheque!



Check Float Sinks!

The time that it takes a check to be withdrawn from your account has dramatically decreased. Be sure to have the cleared funds in your account before you write a check!



New Super Share Money Market

Checking Account
with a special promotional rate:

\$4,500 minimum balance
in your Super Share Checking Account
can earn **2.00%** APY*

As long as you maintain the minimum balance you can make unlimited withdrawals and deposits with no monthly service fee and no annual fee. Don't wait! This rate is for a limited time. The sooner you open your Super Share Checking, the sooner you'll start growing your assets. Talk with our staff for more details.

It is free and easy to change your present draft account to a SuperShare Checking Account. There is a \$25 fee to change your Super Share Checking Account to a regular draft account. Fees can reduce earnings. *Annual Percentage Yield



pap disseminated by corporate radio and its bedfellows. Around the country and in Central New York, there are talented blues musicians, bluegrass players, gospel music choirs, and folk-music performers. Locally, we have such luminaries as Roosevelt Dean and Colleen Kattau and John Rossbach, all of whom provide welcome alternatives to banal music.

In addition, we can choose from a variety of other cultural vehicles—the Syracuse Cultural Workers' calendars and other items, performances and puppet workshops presented by Open Hand Theater, exhibitions at the Community Folk Art Center, youth showcases staged by Eastside Neighbors in Partnership. That's not an all-exhaustive list, just a sampling.

Third, there are instances in which we need to both advocate for change while also mulling over current options. Clearly, we should work for radically improved mass transportation, more bike paths and reassessment of ways to get people from home to work. At the same time, many of us need to drive to get to work, and it's far better to drive fuel-efficient vehicles.

Fourth, let's consider more direct relationships with local producers like farmers and crafters. Food co-ops are one option, and so are agreements between a group of households and a local farmer. The group commits to buying a certain amount of vegetables over the course of the summer. In regard to crafts, local folks produce a range of goods - clothing, woodworks, note cards and much more. Although some of the goods are way too expensive for the average credit-union member, other items are quite affordable. The point is to get over the habit of turning instinctively to mass-produced goods for Christmas and birthdays.

Fifth, we should focus on the end-point of consumption, the mass of things thrown away every week. Recycling should happen in many forms, not just in blue bins. For example, you could save your children's baby clothing and pass it on to friends and relatives.

RAFFLE!
 Enter our WebTeller/Express Service raffle and win two ways:

1. You save yourself time and gas* by taking care of business right there at home and
2. You just might win a prize!

Every time you make a financial transaction on WebTeller or Express Service you are automatically entered. The more you use WebTeller or Express Service, the better your chance of winning. First Prize is a Digital Camera. Second and third will get you a delicious meal for two at a member-owned restaurant and fourth is a little gas money. Drawing will take place in September.

PS: You're not buying anything!


**Saving gas is more than just saving a little money. It could mean saving a life. A good example of the hidden cost of oil was recently provided by the execution of Nigerian poet, environmentalist and human rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others. Their deaths were a direct result of attempts to protect their homeland from the ravages of big oil companies, primarily Shell.*
 (from www.goldmanprize.org)




Miss the the last one?
Here's your second chance!

Your Money, Your Life

A Money Skills Course for Adults



All participants who complete the program will be eligible for a raffle prize valued at \$100.



Class meets at SCFCU's Westcott Street Office
 7 Thursdays starting September 16.
 6:00 to 7:15 PM

\$10 for course, \$3 discount for pre registration.
 Call Robert at 471-1116, ext. 206 to join.
 Space is limited, so register early.

Sponsored by the WCC and SCFCU.

Sixth, it's important to emphasize that while all of us buy things, we are obviously more than consumers. We enter and experience various common spaces: libraries and schools, parks, community centers and cooperative gardens. We need to honor those spaces and all those who work to sustain them.

Lastly, being a responsible consumer involves research and sometimes making hard choices. All the relevant issues can't be fully addressed in two articles in our newsletter. Please regard this as preliminary discussion. We will return to consumerism in a future issue of Commonwealth, sometime during 2005. CM



Around the Office

We are very pleased to welcome **Carmen Castro** as our newest staff member. Carmen has several years of experience in financial institutions and is bilingual (English/Spanish). She has joined the Loan Department. Please be sure and introduce yourself.

Our *Southwest Office ATM* is now operational. It is located in the foyer of the South Avenue entrance and is open whenever the Southwest Community Center is open. Also a reminder that when you use your SCFCU Debit Card at our ATMs (Westcott Street & South Avenue) there is no fee.

Just a quick note to remind all members that — Just because you write a check and give it to a merchant, mail it to the phone, utility, credit card, etc. company or provide share draft information over the phone doesn't mean that it will show up on your share draft statement as a check. Whaaaaa???? — What I mean here is that the recipient of the check can "convert" it to an electronic payment which in turn means that it may show up on your statement without a check number or it may even show up as check number 8000.

Holiday Closings
 Labor Day - September 6
 Federal Holiday - October 11
 VOTE! - November 2

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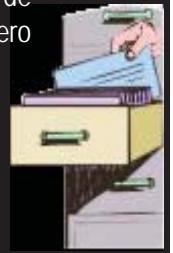
Alrededor de la Oficina

Es un placer para nosotros darle la bienvenida a Carmen Castro como nuestra nueva empleada. Carmen, quien es bilingue, español e ingles, estará trabajando en el departamento de crédito. Por favor acérquese y presentese.

Nuestro cajero electronico en el South West está disponible. Esta localizado en la entrada ubicada sobre la South Avenue y estará abierto al público cuando el centro Southwest Community Center lo esté. Tambien le recordamos que cuando use su tarjeta debito SCFCU no se le cobrará ningún cargo por su uso en cualquiera de nuestras oficinas (Westcott of Southwest)

Solo una pequeña nota para recordar a todos los socios que.....cuando usted gira un cheque a un vendedor, lo envía a su compañía de telefono, gas, electricidad, tarjeta de credito, etc. o provee información por teléfono acerca de su cuenta corriente, no significa que esto se va a reflejar en su extracto bancario mensual como cheque. Queeee?...Lo que quiere decir es que quien recibe el cheque puede convertirlo en un pago electrónico, lo cual significa que se muestra en el extracto mensual sin número de cheque o puede aparecer como número de cheque 8000.

Tendremos una explicacion mas completa en nuestro reporte del mes de septiembre.



FIELD OF MEMBERSHIP		
Alto Cinco	424-9485	Preservation Association of CNY..... 475-0119
Appleseed Trust.....	422-6399	Pupil Transportation Safety Institute..... 476-7475
AversonCPA	477-1000	SAGE/Upstate..... 478-1923
Bob Ryder Painting	492-6328	South East University Neighborhood Ass'n..... 472-3110
Boom Babies Vintage Clothing.....	472-1949	Southwest Neighborhood
CNY Chapter NY Civil Liberties Union.....	471-2821	Syracuse Community Choir..... 446-4374
CommonWorks.....	425-1019	Syracuse Community Radio..... 234-1999
Eastside Neighbors In Partnership.....	471-7911	Syracuse Cultural Workers..... 474-1132
East Side Soccer.....	445-2165	Syracuse Model Neighborhood Corp. 475-8437
Empire Housing and Development Corp.	425-7775	Syracuse Peace Council (SPC)..... 472-5478
Harmony Design Group.....	476 9935	Syracuse Real Food Cooperative (SRFC)..... 472-1385
Home Headquarters.....	474-1939	Syracuse United Neighbors..... 476-7475
Jowonio School.....	445 4010	Time of Jubilee Land Trust..... 428-0070
Jubilee Homes of Syracuse.....	428-0070	University Neighborhood Preservation Ass'n..... 476-5228
Learning Place	471-1446	Wellspring Center for Self Healing..... 455-2645
Maziuk & Company, Inc.....	474-3959	Westcott Community Center..... 478-8634
Open Hand Theater.....	476-0466	Westcott Community Development Corp..... 426-0243
Partners for Arts Education	234-9911	Westcott/Near Eastside Neighborhood
Peace Action of Central New York.....	478-7442	Westcott East Neighborhood Association..... 479-7301
		Women's Information Center
		478-4636
		* Anyone who lives, works, worships or attends school

Credit Union Hours: Eastside Office - Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Noon-6pm, Tuesday & Thursday Noon-4pm
 Southwest Office - Monday through Thursday, 10am to 3pm, Friday, 10am to 6pm, Saturday, 10am to 1pm
 VISA, lost or stolen (800)453-4270