



# EnerGComm

## Federal Credit Union

*...Your Interest Come First*

No. 88

Butte Office: 2100 Harrison Avenue • Butte, Montana 59701 • (406) 782-2139

October 2002

Colstrip Branch: 421 Willow • Colstrip, Montana 59323 • (406) 748-2324

**— Visit us online! [www.energcomm.org](http://www.energcomm.org) —**

### International Credit Union Day is October 17

For 54 years, credit unions have set aside the third Thursday in October to celebrate International Credit Union Day. Each year, it gives us an opportunity to remember our proud history as we promote understanding and support for the credit union difference.

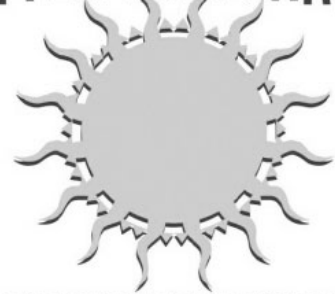
In 1848, Friedrich Raiffeisen, mayor of Flammersfeld, Germany, conceived of the idea for a credit union to help ease the distress of farmers suffering from the famine that had struck his district. Today, more than 100 million people belong to 37,759 credit unions around the world.

Member service is the foundation of the credit union movement. Whether a credit union is providing a loan to help a member cover unexpected medical bills, giving financial counseling to a member whose company closed its doors, or simply offering a better deal on a used car loan, the credit union is making a difference for its members and the community as a whole.

In the 2001 American Banker/Gallup Consumer Survey, credit unions ranked #1 again in consumer satisfaction—16 straight years. The survey gave credit unions higher ratings than banks and other financial institutions on trustworthiness. And we are first in service. The poll found more people who use credit unions as their primary financial institution say the quality of their service is improving compared to those who use banks.

This International Credit Union Day, we are excited to see how many people have caught our spirit. Thank you for being part of the credit union difference. Please don't hesitate to tell us how we're doing, and how we can provide even better service in the future.

BUILDING A  
**BETTER TOMORROW**



INTERNATIONAL CREDIT UNION DAY

### Hours

**Uptown Butte Office**  
11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (M–F)

**Harrison Ave. Office**  
8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (M–F)  
*Office closed every Tuesday*  
8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

**Harrison Ave. Drive-Thru**  
7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (M–Th)  
7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. (F)

**Colstrip Branch**  
8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (M–F)



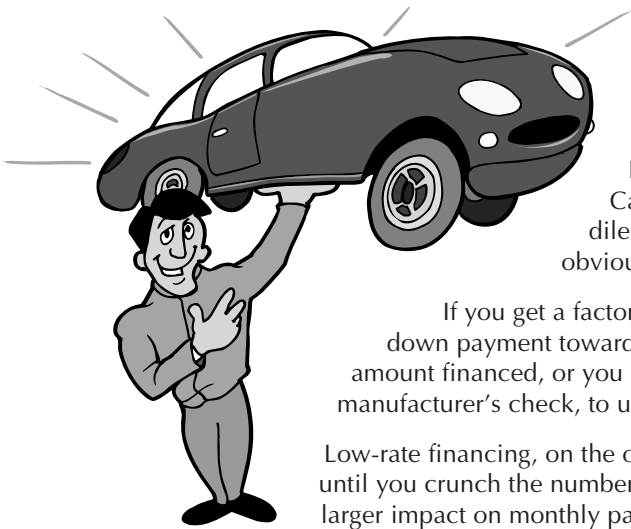
**Get EnerGComm's**

**Visa®**

**with a Low**

**9.9% APR**

**and Free Yourself of High Rates!**



## How Will You Buy Your Dream Car?

Rebate or low-rate financing? Car buyers often face this dilemma, and the decision isn't obvious.

If you get a factory rebate, you can use it as a down payment toward your purchase, lowering the amount financed, or you can get it in the form of a manufacturer's check, to use as you wish.

Low-rate financing, on the other hand, sounds great too—until you crunch the numbers. The amount financed has a larger impact on monthly payments and total interest charges than the interest rate does.

Take an offer for 0% financing for 24 months or a \$2,000 factory rebate on a \$20,000 purchase. If you take the credit union's rate of, for example, 6.5% and the rebate (thus financing only \$18,000), you actually would save about \$30 a month.

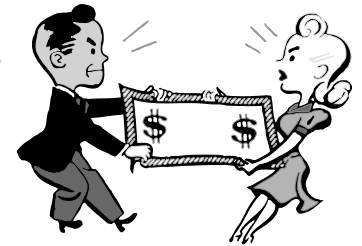
Discount financing plans generally are limited to shorter lengths and use a sliding scale where the best rates are for the shortest terms. And there isn't always one rate. You may find 0.9% on 24 months, 3.9% on 36 months, and so on. Low-rate financing terms often are so short that most people can't afford the monthly payments.

To find out which is better for you, see the calculator "Which is better: a rebate or special dealer financing?" at [www.cuna.org](http://www.cuna.org). Go to "Consumer Information" and choose "Calculators." Or, simply give us a call at EnerGComm Federal Credit Union and we'll crunch the numbers for you!

## Don't Let Money Ruin Marital Bliss

Half of all marriages in the U.S. end in divorce, often because of money. The success or failure of a marriage can depend on how well a couple handles money. A couple's first experience handling money may be the decision to open a joint share draft/checking account, maintain separate accounts, or—a combination of the two—a joint and individual accounts.

Don't make the decision lightly and, according to financial planners, don't make it quickly, either. It's better to "ease" into financial blending.



A lot of people get married and the next day put everything into a joint account. Slow down, experts advise, and maintain separate accounts for a while or try a joint account while keeping separate accounts as well.

Joint accounts provide a sense of teamwork, but they can allow one person to be in charge while the other remains "in the dark." This can create tension and lack of communication in a marriage.

Separate accounts help maintain each partner's identity and provide the financial knowledge necessary in case of a divorce or the death of a spouse. As your needs and goals change, or if there's constant tension over money, consider combining or separating your accounts. For information about your options, ask the financial professionals at EnerGComm Federal Credit Union.

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## Beware the Slam Scam

"Slamming"—it sounds like the newest extreme sport, but in reality, it's an illegal marketing scheme in which local and long-distance phone companies switch customers' service without getting permission (CNN/Money July 10). Slammers get away with the unauthorized switching by assuming customers won't notice their service has been changed.

How do you know if you've been slammed? Sometimes the only way to tell is by checking your rate to see if it is higher than the one for which you signed up. If you are a slam victim, file a complaint with the FCC or your state's public utilities' commission immediately. These agencies will see that you don't have to pay any charges or, if you have paid your bill, will make sure you are reimbursed.

Next, call the slamming carrier to inform them you did not authorize the change and that you will not be paying any charges. Finally, call your carrier and ask them to reinstate you.

One way to protect yourself from being slammed is to put a freeze on your phone service. The phone company will be unable to process any changes until the freeze is canceled. Warn your family and friends about this scam, especially the elderly, who are particularly vulnerable to frauds like slamming.



### **Holiday Closings**

#### **Thanksgiving**

November 28 &  
November 29

#### **Christmas**

December 25