SCENE IN: 2013

Former employee Linda Ginter visits Dupaco on Oct. 15 to accept a donation from the R.W. Hoefer Foundation. Ginter suffered a ruptured brain aneurysm, along with other serious complications, in August. Fortunately, she is on the road to recovery. The Dupaco R.W. Hoefer Foundation reflects the spirit of Dupaco's mission of improving people's financial positions and enhancing their quality of life. Learn more at dupaco.com/foundation. (D. Klavitter/Dupaco photo)

P.O. Box 179, Dubuque, IA 52004-0179 • (563) 557-7600 / 800-373-7600 • www.dupaco.com NCUA EQUAL HOUSING LENDER America's Credit Unions

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Dupaco

Winter • 2014

Owner's Manual

Enriching Lives through Sustainable Money

That's Bright Green

Enriching Lives through Sustainable Money: That's Bright Green

In 2013, Dupaco helped members go more than green—we went bright green.

Bright green is Dupaco's sustainable approach to money. It reflects your credit union's mission to improve each member's financial position—not just for a day, but for a lifetime. Dupaco does that mainly in two ways:

Dupaco's products, services and advice are designed to keep more greenbacks recycling in your wallet. In that spirit, Dupaco performs thousands of free Dupaco Money Makeovers and Credit History Lessons each year. These detailed reviews helped improve financial sustainability for many members—and non-members, too. From traditional banking and investments to insurance and wealth management, bright green will optimize every stage of your financial life.

Bright green also means Dupaco helps strengthen your hometown. That's because Dupaco is more than local—it's a member-owned cooperative. Your money stays right here, recycled within the community. It's not siphoned away by outside stockholders. This helps your friends, your family and your neighborhood. When the community grows, everyone prospers.

Again in 2013, your participation in Dupaco put more money to work locally by providing your friends and neighbors low-cost loans for cars, homes, education, funding for small businesses and more. Overall credit union loan growth increased more than 7.2 percent in 2013. At the same time, Dupaco continues to pay above-market rates for member savings, resulting in increased deposits of more than 7.8 percent.

While member enrichment is Dupaco's hallmark, your board and management team's job also is to ensure your financial cooperative remains strong. This benefits members and communities well into the future. Your credit union's 2013 performance reinforced that objective.

Dupaco 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

- Membership grew to more than 72,000. **An increase of more than 6.4%**
- Deposits grew to more than $987 million. **An increase of more than 7.8%**
- Assets total more than $1.13 billion. **An increase of more than 6%**
- Loans outstanding exceed $591 million. **An increase of more than 7.2%**
- Dupaco remains extremely strong with capital reserves **exceeding 12.4% of assets**
- For the fourth time in five years, Raddon Financial Group recognized Dupaco as one of the **10 "Top Performing" credit unions in the United States** with more than $500 million in assets, based on the credit union's 2012 performance

For the fourth time in five years, Raddon Financial Group (RFG), an independent national credit union research firm, recognized Dupaco as one of the 10 top-performing credit unions in the United States, based on the credit union's 2012 performance.

As a member-owned financial cooperative, these cost savings are returned to you in the form of higher rates on savings and lower rates on loans. It supports improved conveniences, like mobile check deposit and person-to-person payments. This recognition confirms that value proposition and member service strategies are moving in the right direction.

These strategies align with Dupaco's cooperative principles, which put people before profits. This long-term vision is a tribute to your credit union's democratically elected board of directors.

You are extremely fortunate to have a legacy of service from exemplary individuals, including three who passed away in 2013: George Bogas, David Hansel and Donald Schadle.

In true volunteer spirit, each sat at the board table and asked not how the credit union could make more money, but rather how the credit union could better serve more members. That's taking the long view. That's sustainable. That's bright green.

Your participation makes a difference.

Thank you.

Joe Hearn
President and CEO

Dupaco Board Member Dick Burgmeier visits with a member during the 64th Annual Membership Meeting held at the Peosta (Iowa) Community Centre on Feb. 10, 2013. (L. Hemesath/Dupaco photo)

65TH Participate in the Annual Membership Meeting

You are invited to attend the 65th Annual Meeting of the membership of Dupaco Community Credit Union on Sunday, Feb. 9, at the Peosta Community Centre, 7896 Burds Road, Peosta, Iowa. The business meeting begins at 1 p.m. and will be followed by refreshments, music and a sandwich luncheon. Door prizes will also be awarded.

Also, the Nominating Committee will present the following slate of proposed candidates: Denise Dolan,* Keith Langan* and Robert Wethal.* Please know that new state regulations require members to vote by paper ballot for credit union board elections. Registration and paper ballots will be available at the annual meeting.

Tickets are $1 per member and must be purchased in advance at any credit union location. If you cannot attend the meeting in person, follow live updates at http://twitter.com/dupaco.

*Incumbents

Make Time for a Financial Checkup

Much like an annual physical, not many people get excited about reviewing their financial affairs.

Even so, it's important to take stock of your financial house at least once a year. It's a chance to review your budget, loans, saving habits, investments and insurance—and make any necessary adjustments.

Now is a perfect opportunity to make sure your finances are on track for the new year, says Paula Ervolino, a financial services representative at Dupaco Community Credit Union.

Remember to reevaluate these important parts of your financial situation:

Credit card balances: "Pay attention to interest rates and how much you're paying, and see if there are lower options out there," Ervolino says.

Mortgage and other loans: If you have a mortgage or other loans, verify that you're not paying more interest than necessary.

Account cards: The way your Dupaco accounts are titled affects who has access to your money and how they can access it and when. "Things do change within a family, so make sure you have the appropriate people listed as beneficiaries and joint owners," Ervolino says.

Insurance coverage: Take the extra time to get a free insurance quote from Dupaco Insurance Services to make sure you're adequately covered. "It's one of those things that you have to pay for anyway, so why not get the best deal?" Ervolino says.

Investments: Meet with your financial planner to make sure your investments are still allocated according to your wishes and needs.

Iowa Community Credit Union Members Approve Merger with Dupaco

Members of Iowa Community Credit Union (ICCU) voted to merge with Dupaco Community Credit Union during a meeting Nov. 18 in Waterloo, Iowa.

Once complete, the merger will create a stronger financial cooperative for members of both organizations, offering expanded financial products, services and advice, as well as greater convenience.

The organization will continue as Dupaco Community Credit Union, with 18 branches, more than 80,000 members and locations serving the Dubuque, Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Dyersville, Manchester and Carroll, Iowa, communities, as well as Platteville, Wis., and Galena, Ill.

Following final regulatory approval, the intended merger is expected to be completed sometime during the first quarter of 2014.

Merger FAQ: dupaco.com/merger

A member casts her ballot at the Iowa Community Credit Union Member Vote Meeting, which was held at the Waterloo Center for the Arts on Nov. 18. ICCU members overwhelmingly voted to merge with Dupaco Community Credit Union. (D. Klavitter/Dupaco photo)

Dear Dupaco,

Today I saw a poster in our lunch room announcing that Dupaco would be at our workplace offering financial counseling. I've been a Dupaco member for 22 years—what on earth could you say to this long-time member that I haven't already heard?

Ben There, Done That

Ben's financial home—Dupaco—was stationed at his second home—work—during his break, visiting with interested employees about their credit reports.

When Nancy Laugesen from Dupaco recognized him as a long-time credit union member, she waved him over and asked if he had ever examined his credit report.

He had not. So he gave her 10 minutes of his time to see what things looked like.

What Ben didn't know was that there was a lot of room for additional savings in his budget with some debt restructuring.

In examining his credit report, I saw a mortgage and a vehicle loan with other lenders, and a high-balance, high-rate retail credit card that he admitted was becoming a budget burden. After suggesting restructuring to pay down their debt faster and cheaper, I got him a Money Makeover appointment with Jo Roling in Platteville, Wis.

What a difference a day makes! That one day chatting with me in the employee break room paved the road to an early payoff of their mortgage debt—seven months sooner—by refinancing to a low-interest Mini-Mortgage. Jo also consolidated the credit card debt and auto loan to a home equity loan at no cost. In the end, Ben and his wife will be saving more than $22,000 in interest and will have all debt paid off in 3½ years. A true team effort on behalf of our long-time member turned lifetime member!

Let us see if we can improve your financial situation. Send your financial questions to: DearDupaco@dupaco.com

***OR** Dear Dupaco, P.O. Box 179, Dubuque, IA 52004-0179.*

IRA Contribution Reminder

Individual Retirement Account

dupaco.com/ira

Qualified individuals can still make contributions to a Traditional or Roth IRA for 2013 until April 15, 2014.

Contributions are limited to $5,500 for each of the 2013 and 2014 tax years, according to Dupaco Community Credit Union's Jamie Blake and Lynn Schmitt, both tri-state-area certified IRA professionals.

A "catch-up" provision allowing individuals age 50 or older to make additional contributions of $1,000 for each of the 2013 and 2014 tax years also is available, Blake and Schmitt pointed out.

To learn more, contact the IRA experts at any Dupaco location or Dupaco's Member Services team at (563) 557-7600 / 800-373-7600, ext. 218, or service@dupaco.com.

Jamie Blake *Lynn Schmitt*

Members Save More than $3.54 Million for Holidays

More than $3.54 million was injected into the local economy as a result of Dupaco's payout of this season's Holiday Club deposits to nearly 3,500 member accounts.

A Holiday Club is traditionally opened in November, with small deposits made into the account weekly or biweekly throughout the year. Around the following Oct. 31, all savings, plus accumulated dividends, are automatically deposited into the members' share draft checking or savings accounts.

The 2013 Holiday Club savings total was an increase over the $3.48 million saved and disbursed in 2012.

Holiday Club accounts are the perfect way for individuals to learn the art of thrift and avoid a post-holiday "debt hangover," according to Dupaco President/CEO Joe Hearn.

"The habit of systematically saving money is a core principle of Dupaco and its Money Makeover," Hearn says.

For more information, visit any Dupaco location or contact Dupaco's Member Services team at (563) 557-7600 / 800-373-7600, ext. 206, or service@dupaco.com.

dupaco.com/save

STAFF UPDATES

Erin Dolehide
was promoted to member service representative at the Hillcrest branch in Dubuque.

Joe Hearn
President/CEO, was elected to serve as treasurer of the Credit Union Executives Society (CUES) board of directors for 2013–2014. The Madison, Wis.-based CUES is an independent, not-for-profit, international membership association. Its mission is to educate and develop credit union chief executive officers, directors and future leaders. A graduate of the rigorous CUES CEO Institute, Hearn holds the Certified Chief Executive designation from CUES.

David Klavitter
Senior vice president of marketing and public relations, was appointed to serve on the Advocacy Committee of the Iowa Credit Union League (ICUL) Board of Directors for 2014. The Advocacy Committee is responsible for providing direction to the ICUL on public policy development and political engagement. The ICUL is a trade association representing the interests of Iowa's 116 not-for-profit credit unions and their more than one million members.

Brian Lyons
joined Dupaco Insurance Services as an insurance agent at the Williams branch in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Karen Bergfeld assumed the Share Draft/Card Services Specialist position at the Pennsylvania branch in Dubuque.

Claire Cook was promoted to accounting assistant at the Pennsylvania branch in Dubuque.

Kandice Kerr joined Dupaco as a business lending processor at the Hillcrest branch in Dubuque.

Mary Mullenix was promoted to training assistant at the Hillcrest branch in Dubuque.

Marie Pillard was promoted to real estate closing representative at the Asbury, Iowa, branch.

In Memory of

Don Schadle

1923–2013 ~ DUPACO BOARD MEMBER 1957–1994

The entire Dupaco family remembers former long-time Dupaco board member Don Schadle, who passed away on Nov. 15, 2013.

Members elected Schadle to the board in 1957, where he served as a volunteer until 1994. He was employed at the Dubuque Packing Company for 39 years until his retirement in 1982.

Don's gentle good nature and volunteer spirit earned him the respect and admiration of all who knew him. He will be greatly missed.

Dupaco Staff Career Milestones

5-Year Employee
Sherry Leeser

10-Year Employee
Paula Ervolino

15-Year Employees
Erin Engler
Peggy Christ

25-Plus-Year Employees
Jeann Digman (26)
Mike Ferris (29)
Nancy Laugesen (31)
Pat Slattery (33)
Sandy Courtney (43)

SCENE IN: 2013

Dupaco President/CEO Joe Hearn (left) marvels at student Rebecca Kilburg's winning poster entry in Dupaco's annual National Philanthropy Day Coloring Contest on Nov. 14 in Dubuque. Dupaco's community impact extends beyond pure philanthropy: When people do business with a member-owned cooperative like Dupaco, money stays local, which helps friends, family and the community. When the community grows, everyone prospers. (D. Klavitter/Dupaco photo)

Dupaco Financial Services — DUPACO FINANCIAL SERVICES — dupaco.com/invest

Tax Season Retirement Planning

By Michael Poppen

When was the last time you evaluated your retirement savings goals? Do you know how much you need to save for a comfortable retirement?

Financial experts speculate that Social Security will provide only a small percentage of the income retirees may need to maintain their pre-retirement lifestyle, which means your personal retirement savings is a crucial component in helping you pursue your retirement needs. A powerful and sometimes overlooked vehicle for retirement savings is an IRA.

An IRA is an individual retirement account to which you can contribute up to $5,500 annually ($6,500 if you are over 50 years old) for 2013. The great advantage of an IRA is that your investments' earnings are tax-deferred until withdrawn. Also, compounding of interest makes your money work harder because you earn interest not only on your contributions to your account, but also on the interest those contributions generate.

Dupaco Financial Services offers access to traditional and Roth IRAs. The significant difference between the two is that contributions are tax-deductible for the traditional IRA,* while a Roth IRA may not offer tax-deductible contributions, but provides for tax-free distributions.**

There are obvious benefits to both, and we can help you find the right IRA to help you address your retirement investment needs by analyzing factors such as your current and future tax bracket and the number of years it will take you to retire.

We can also assist you if you are expecting a lump-sum distribution through your employer's retirement savings plan. If you have recently changed jobs or are about to retire, an IRA rollover provides the advantage of preserving the tax-deferred status of your assets, while many times offering you a wider selection of investments.

As tax season quickly approaches, please take advantage of our services. Discuss the opportunities afforded by IRAs and other retirement savings plans and let us help you work toward your long-term financial goals. Please call our department to schedule a no-obligation consultation.

*For deductible contributions, certain income limits apply.
**Federal taxes only. Individual states may vary. Please consult your tax advisor.

Representing Dupaco Financial Services are (L to R) Dan Smith, CFP®; Michael Schroeder; Suzan Martin-Hallahan, CFP®; Michael Poppen; and David Andrew.

FREE SEMINAR — FCT — FIRST COMMUNITY TRUST — dupaco.com/trust

An Overview of Wills, Trusts and More

Presented by Dupaco and First Community Trust

Wednesday, Jan. 29, 3–4 p.m.

or

Wednesday, Jan. 29, 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Dupaco's Pennsylvania Ave. location, 3999 Pennsylvania Ave., Dubuque, Iowa

Navigating Estate-Planning Basics

How do you know if you need a trust instead of a simple will?

Many people assume that revocable living trusts are just for the wealthy, but the benefits they can offer to most people are significant.

When it comes to deciding whether you should set up a revocable living trust as part of your estate plan, you'll need to understand the main benefits that it offers compared to a last will and testament.

Estate planning should be approached in the same manner as any other important decision in your life. It is about getting the right legal documents in place to plan for the possibility of mental incapacity and inevitable death.

Learn about essential estate-planning documents, including last wills and testaments, revocable living trusts, irrevocable trusts and more at this seminar.

Call Jim Liddle at (563) 690-0029 or e-mail jliddle@fctrust.com to reserve a seat at this no-cost seminar.

Jim Liddle, First Community Trust Representative

Protection Connection

Selling Something Online?

dupaco.com/fraud

Don't Buy into Fraud

If you've ever tried to sell something online, you know how convenient it can be. Within a matter of clicks from the comfort of your couch, you can create a virtual garage sale.

But sales venues like Craigslist, eBay® and even newspaper classifieds are convenient hangouts for scammers.

Before you reach out to an interested buyer, be on the alert for ways you could be taken advantage of. Thieves use fake or stolen money orders or cashier's checks, make bogus claims and resort to other tactics to defraud innocent sellers.

It's happening locally. Dupaco Community Credit Union has intercepted multiple attempts by members trying to cash fraudulent checks received from online sales, says Tami Rechtenbach, vice president of member services at Dupaco. In each case, the scammers sent checks for more than the sale price and asked for the balance to be returned to them.

"They're coming up with all kinds of reasons they want the money back—shipping charges or trouble cashing the check locally," Rechtenbach says. "Any time they want to send you a check and have you send money back, the red flag has to go straight up in the air."

Here's where the seller can get hit: If you cash a fraudulent check, you will be responsible for repaying those funds.

Follow these guidelines, provided by Craigslist to sidestep would-be scammers:

- Deal locally with people you can meet in person.
- Never wire funds. Anyone who asks you to do so is likely a scammer.
- Never give out financial information, including your bank account number.
- Avoid deals involving shipping or escrow services, and know that only a scammer will "guarantee" your transaction.

Bottom line: If you have any doubts about the person you're about to do business with, end your communication with them, and ask a Dupaco staff member to review the situation. It's not worth the potential risk.

Tami Rechtenbach

Dupaco | DUPACO INSURANCE SERVICES | dupaco.com/insure

Paying High Premiums Doesn't Mean a Premium Policy

It's not uncommon for Dupaco Community Credit Union members to save hundreds—sometimes even thousands—in annual premiums by moving their insurance policies to Dupaco Insurance Services.

So, what gives? How can there be such a huge difference in premiums?

When members take advantage of Dupaco's member-owned insurance agency, they become part of a larger buying group, with access to additional associational discounts.

Another key factor: Insurance rates often come down to the mysterious insurance score. Insurers weigh some 250 factors—everything from your credit score to your accident history—to calculate your insurance score, which helps carriers predict how likely you are to have a future accident or insurance claim.

Each company weighs the factors a little differently. Some might rely heavily on the number of miles you've driven, while others are more concerned with who your previous carrier was, says Tim Bemis, assistant manager at Dupaco Insurance Services.

While some factors are out of your control, there are ways to increase your chances of saving money on premiums:

- Pay your premiums on time.
- Maintain continuous coverage. Insurers frown upon lapses, and you'll pay for it through higher rates in the future.
- Package your policies together to take advantage of additional discounts.
- Be a good driver. Avoid speeding tickets, other traffic violations and accidents.

Also, don't get complacent. Review your coverage every year at renewal time, and don't be afraid to shop around.

"What I hear a lot is, 'I've been with my agent a long time.' Well, he's been collecting a lot of premiums for a long time," Bemis says. "Quotes are free, and they don't take any time. That 15 minutes you spend could be worth hundreds."

Dupaco Insurance Services is licensed only in the states of Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Missouri.

Representing Dupaco Insurance Services are (from left) Keith Langan, Brad Langan, Mark Kremer, Pam Baal, Brian Cassidy, David Keil, Brian Lyons, and Tim Bemis.

Dupaco GREAT CREDIT RACE

It's Anyone's Game

With their first VISA® cards in hand, the 13 racers are strategizing how to quickly begin building a stellar credit score.

"The results will help us continue to educate members on how to build their credit and establish a high credit score," says Jill Rothenberger, the racers' credit coach, who also works as a lending consultant supervisor at Dupaco Community Credit Union's JFK branch. "The results will help us continue to educate members on how to build their credit and establish a high credit score."

Coach Rothenberger says there are a few key plays that will help keep these young racers going strong until they cross the finish line:

1. Don't miss a payment, and don't go over the limit. (This one is in the rule book, and a violation will leave the racer disqualified.)
2. Maintain the capacity. Capacity means how much credit you have at your disposal versus how much credit you are using. The lower the capacity, the better the score. The racers have a $500 limit on their VISA. Their best bet is to carry a balance with less than 20 percent capacity, which is a balance of no more than $100 at any given time. "Just by having that card open, it is still giving them credit," Rothenberger says.
3. Don't open new lines of credit. Racers should maintain their first VISA for 12 months before considering adding another credit card to the mix. "If they do open up new credit, I would suggest that they open an installment credit—a personal loan or auto loan—to give them a well-rounded score," says.

dupacocreditrace.com

SCENE IN: 2013

During a meeting of U.S. and international credit union leaders at Princeton University on Oct. 1, Dupaco's David Klavitter presents initial findings from the credit union's pilot project called "The Dupaco Great Credit Race." The prototype study is intended to investigate the establishment and trajectory of a credit score, as well as the most effective components of consumer financial education. (Matt Rainey Photography, LLC)

Dupaco, KAT-FM and Star Cinema present a $1,000 check to the Rising Star Theatre Company at the Annual Benefit Movie in Dubuque on Oct. 26. The Rising Star Theatre Company provides quality productions, meaningful production experiences and varied theatre study opportunities for the youth of Dubuque and the surrounding tri-state communities. (J. Hanniford/Dupaco photo)

SCENE IN: 2013

Say What? Financial Terms Decoded

The financial world can be a complicated, mysterious place. So it's understandable that eyes might glaze over at the sound of an unfamiliar financial term.

But there are some words we should all understand to stay money ahead in life.

Because education is a big part of what Dupaco Community Credit Union is about, the staff has shared some commonly misunderstood financial terms they frequently help decode for members:

1. Power of attorney

When you have power of attorney, you are granting a designated individual, or attorney-in-fact, the legal authority to make decisions and transactions on your behalf in certain situations. However, your power of attorney is no longer valid upon your death. "A lot of people think their power of attorney can take care of things after they die, and that's not the case," says Tami Rechtenbach, vice president of member services at Dupaco. "People should always have a plan on their accounts for what's going to happen after they die."

2. Account card

When you set up a trust account, you must re-title your financial accounts. Otherwise, the trust is worthless. Bring your trust agreement to your financial institution to make sure your financial accounts are in your trust. "A lot of people don't realize the account card trumps the will," Rechtenbach says.

3. Flipped

In today's world, many car owners are upside-down, or flipped, with respect to their car loans. In other words, they owe more than what their vehicle is worth. Car owners can avoid this predicament by staying within their means and sticking with a shorter loan term. "People are stretching out their payments longer so they can afford the payment, but they're trading too soon," says Bob Nicks, indirect senior lending consultant at Dupaco.

4. Capacity

Taking care of your credit score is an integral part of a healthy financial life. And your capacity—how much credit you have at your disposal versus how much credit you are using—makes up 30 percent of that score. "When we talk to members about their credit scores, everyone knows they're supposed to pay their bills and debts on time," says Aaron Plein, vice president, branch manager/service delivery at Dupaco's First Avenue branch in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. "But a lot of consumers don't understand the importance of keeping their balances down on their credit cards." Capacity works in your favor when you stay below 20 to 30 percent of your available line of credit.

Learn more at dupaco.com/lifeevents.

Nursing a Holiday Spending Hangover?

It happens to the best of us.

"Holiday gift giving is fun, so it's easy to get off track and overspend," says Marcie Winkelman, a Dupaco Community Credit Union Money Makeover Artist and senior lending consultant at the JFK branch in Dubuque.

But it's a new year and time to get back on track. Here's how you can get on the mend and set yourself up for success for the next holiday season:

1. Address your holiday debt.

The credit card statements have arrived, itemizing every last holiday purchase. Now what?

Find out whether Dupaco can help you consolidate your debt. Ask whether you can transfer those bills into an installment loan, such as a home equity or personal loan, or a loan secured with collateral.

"Borrowing on a personal loan is better than using a credit card, because the rates are usually going to be better, and you'll pay it down so much faster," Winkelman says. "You'll have a set term, so you'll be able to see the balance going down and the light at the end of the tunnel."

2. Get a financial checkup.

In the meantime, quit using those credit cards.

"If you're still using the credit card, there's a bigger issue," Winkelman says. "You're spending more than you're making, and we need to review your budget."

Schedule a free Dupaco Money Makeover to identify areas where you can cut costs and save money. Dupaco also offers free Credit History Lessons to help you learn how to drive up your credit score.

3. Get ahead for the next holiday season.

Now is a great time to open a Dupaco Holiday Club savings account. Determine how much you spent this past season, and make any necessary adjustments to stay within your newly revised budget.

"Start saving and putting that money aside, even if it's only $5 or $10 a week. It will help get you one step ahead for next year," Winkelman says.

For more information, visit any Dupaco location or contact Dupaco's Member Services team at (563) 557-7600 / 800-373-7600, ext. 206, or service@dupaco.com.

Marcie Winkelman

dupaco.com/save

New Year Begins with Stricter Home Loan Limits

How much house can you afford?

It might not be as much as you think. Stricter mortgage-lending guidelines are rolling out Jan. 10, restricting the amount homebuyers can borrow to help ensure they can afford their mortgages.

Under the new federal guidelines, a borrower's total monthly recurring debt—including car and student loans, mortgage payments and other debt—cannot exceed 43 percent of his or her gross monthly income. Previously, the debt-to-income ratio was restricted to 45 percent.

"Some lenders were taking advantage of people just to get their numbers up," says Jeann Digman, Dupaco Community Credit Union's vice president of mortgage lending. "We need to make sure we're putting members in the right home and not setting them up for failure down the road."

For first-time homebuyers, the new guidelines can be stifling, perhaps even a homeownership deal breaker. If you're in the market for a house, follow these steps to help ensure you're buying a home that's realistic for your budget:

1. Review your credit. Interest rates and closing costs are based on your credit score. Schedule a free Dupaco Credit History Lesson now to give yourself time to build your score before you need the loan.

2. Review your total financial picture. Keep your calendar handy and schedule a free Dupaco Money Makeover. Find out whether you can restructure some of your other debts to stay within the new lending guidelines and free up more money for your down payment. If you're expecting a tax refund, ask how it can best help you reach your homeownership goal. To qualify for fixed-rate financing, your down payment must be at least 5 percent.

3. Get pre-approved before you shop. "It's going to help if they get pre-approved first so they know what they can afford and don't have their hearts set on something they won't be able to buy," Digman says.

Jeann Digman

dupaco.com/homes

Save While You Explore the World

Trying to trim your vacation expenses? It might be as simple as taking full advantage of your credit union membership status.

At Dupaco Community Credit Union, members can save while they explore the world. Through Dupaco's Travel Rebate Program, members receive a rebate in their savings account after they return home from a vacation booked through one of Dupaco's preferred travel providers.

Dupaco partners with Collette Vacations, of Pawtucket, R.I., and Tri-State Travel, headquartered in Galena, Ill. Participants must identify themselves as a Dupaco member when registering with the travel company to receive the rebate.

Beyond the rebate, vacation packages also can save travelers big bucks and travel-induced headaches, says David Lange, a sales representative with Tri-State Travel.

"Hotels and transportation are the two biggest costs involved in travel. Going by motor coach will be less expensive than flying," says Lange, adding that most Tri-State Travel packages include motor-coach transportation. "And it's less hassle. We take care of the luggage handling, so there's no reason for it to be lost, damaged or destroyed."

The rebate amount is determined by which travel provider and tour package are selected. Both Collette Vacations and Tri-State Travel offer a large number of tour options, including destinations across the country and beyond.

Dupaco membership really does have its perks.

dupaco.com/travel

Dupaco to Award College Scholarship Money

Your credit union membership gives you access to scholarship opportunities for college. Don't miss the chance to apply for free money!

The Dupaco Community Credit Union Scholarship Program offers up to five nonrenewable $1,000 scholarships to member-students in good standing who plan to enroll at any accredited college or university as full-time, first-year students. A minimum of one scholarship will be awarded to a member-student planning to attend a qualified community, trade or technical college. Entries must be dropped off at any Dupaco branch or postmarked no later than Monday, March 31.

The Warren A. Morrow Memorial Scholarship Program is open to any Dupaco member in good standing who plans to enroll at an eligible post-secondary educational institution. The program, facilitated by the Iowa Credit Union Foundation, provides scholarship opportunities for high school seniors and post-high-school graduates. Entry deadline for this program is Friday, Feb. 7, and applications must be submitted online.

Scholarship information, including application forms and complete rules and eligibility guidelines, is available at dupaco.com/scholarships

SCENE IN: 2013

A group of Dupaco employees, dressed as black cats, walk in the Dubuque Halloween Parade on Oct. 28. (L. Hemesath/Dupaco photo)

2014 COMMUNITY CALENDAR

If you have any questions on Community Calendar information, contact Amy Wickham, Assistant Vice President, Marketing Communications, at (563) 557-7600, ext. 2235, or awickham@dupaco.com.

www.facebook.com/dupaco

twitter.com/dupaco

Dupaco Hockey Nights!

Hockey is the coolest game in town—but nothing's cooler than saving big money on admission. Join the fun as the United States Hockey League's local rivals do battle on each other's home ice. During Dupaco Night at both ice arenas, you'll be able to take advantage of reduced ticket prices for an evening of fun. Members can purchase reserved-seat tickets in advance for just $6 each. But score your tickets early—quantities are limited.

CEDAR RAPIDS ICE ARENA | CEDAR RAPIDS

Dubuque Fighting Saints VS. Cedar Rapids RoughRiders

Saturday, Feb. 15, 7:05 p.m.

Advance tickets are required and available only at Dupaco's 3131 Williams Blvd. location in Cedar Rapids.

MYSTIQUE ICE CENTER | DUBUQUE

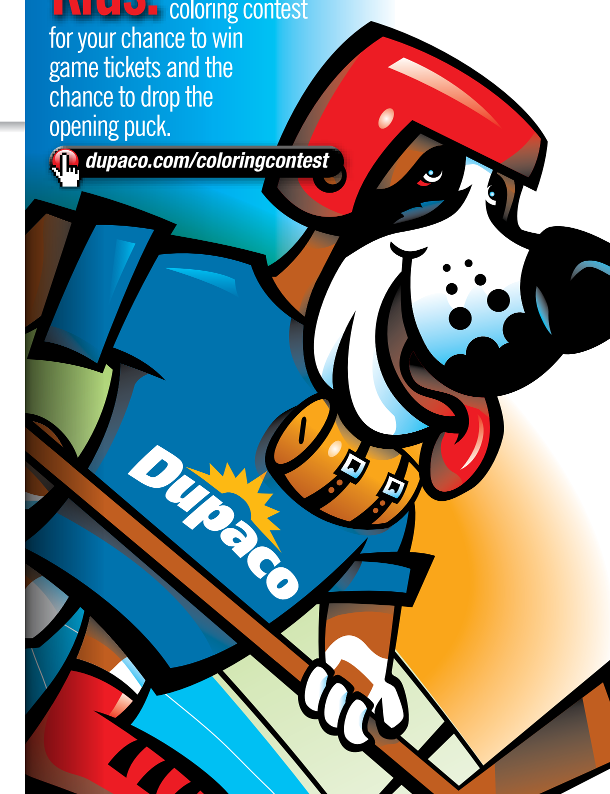
Cedar Rapids RoughRiders VS. Dubuque Fighting Saints

Saturday, Feb. 22, 7:05 p.m.

Advance tickets are required and available only at Dupaco's Hillcrest/JFK location in Dubuque.

Kids: Enter the DoPack coloring contest for your chance to win game tickets and the chance to drop the opening puck.

dupaco.com/coloringcontest



Cast Your Vote! BEST FEST

Voting is open for BestFest 2013, which honors the tri-state area's best products, services, food and entertainment in support of Hospice of Dubuque's fundraising efforts.

Vote online at www.dupaco.com/bestfest or look in The Dubuque Advertiser for an official BestFest ballot. All ballots must be received by 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 31. The best of the tri-states will be honored at BestFest on Thursday, March 20, at the Grand River Center, where the winners will gather and give away samples of their best products.

Tickets to this annual benefit event will be available for purchase in February at Dupaco's 3299 Hillcrest Road location and at Hospice of Dubuque's office at 1670 JFK Road. Vote for the best, then come out and enjoy with the rest of the tri-states.

dupaco.com/bestfest

American Red Cross of the Tri-States Chapter

Nominate an Everyday Hero

Now in its 11th year, Dupaco, the American Red Cross of the Tri-States, KWWL and Radio Dubuque stations (92.9 KAT-FM, 1370 KDTH, 101.1 The River and 97.3 The Rock) present Everyday Heroes of the Tri-States.

If you know a tri-state-area resident who has made a difference through his or her actions, performed an extraordinary act or even saved a life, nominate that individual as an Everyday Hero.

Nominees are eligible for recognition in any of the following categories: Animal Rescue, Education, Fire & Rescue, Adult Good Samaritan (age 18+), Youth Good Samaritan (under 18), Health Care, Law Enforcement, Military, Professional Responder, Volunteer Community Impact and Workplace Safety.

To nominate an Everyday Hero, visit www.dupaco.com/heroes. Nominations are due by 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 24. Those selected as honorees will be recognized at a special public presentation and breakfast Tuesday, March 18.

dupaco.com/heroes

Dupaco Discount Ski Day

This winter, catch big air and savings with Dupaco's discount day at Chestnut Mountain Resort in Galena, Ill. Stop by any Dupaco location and pick up a free coupon. Then redeem it at the Chestnut office on the date below.

Don't know how to ski? No problem. With our special Dupaco coupon you can receive a lesson, lift ticket and ski or snowboard rental. So whether you're just beginning or a pro, these discounts are rad reasons to hit the slopes and dig into the fresh powder!

Chestnut Mountain Resort

Sunday, Feb. 9, noon–9 p.m.

Lift Ticket $25 (savings of $25)

Lift Ticket, Lesson and Rental $35 (savings of $67)

Skating Party

Are you ready to roll? Dollar is pleased to invite all DoPack members and their families to a special private skating party Saturday, March 1, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Skate Country, 5630 Saratoga Road, in Asbury, Iowa. Tickets for the party are just $2.25 and include admission, quad-skate rental (in-line skate rental is extra) and unlimited soda (a savings of approximately $2.50).

Tickets should be purchased in advance and are available at all Dubuque Dupaco locations. Quantities are limited, so skate into a Dupaco branch to get yours today!

Save Bucks on Bull Riding

Enjoy the longest eight seconds in pro sports with professional bull riding. Cowboys and bulls will stampede into Dubuque's Five Flags Arena Friday–Saturday, Feb. 7–8. Adults can save 5 "bucks" off regular ticket prices for the Feb. 7 performance by picking up discount coupons available at any Dupaco location. Redeem coupons when purchasing your Friday night tickets in advance at the Five Flags Arena box office.