

# West View Savings Bank

“Over 100 Years of Quality Banking”

Volume 2, Issue 2

NEWSLETTER

February 2009

## Five Financial Resolutions for 2009

*A Message From Our President David J. Bursic*

I hope that 2009 is much kinder to investors than the past year. Since wishful thinking won't get the job done here are five financial New Year's resolutions to help rebuild your net worth. Surprise: They're not all about saving more and spending less.

### 1. I will accurately assess my financial situation.

Examine your bank statements for the past 12 months. What do they say about you? Are you a spendthrift who shells out more on monthly interest payments than on necessities? Are you a risk-averse saver whose only asset is cash? If you maintain your current mix of stock, mutual fund and bank investments, will you be able to sleep at night?

Take the time to look in the mirror and make an honest assessment of where you are. What does

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## Passavant Hospital Foundation Reaches Annual Goal



*Zeiss Pentero Microscope*

Passavant Hospital Foundation is wrapping up their 2008 Annual Appeal. With donors being generous even in tough times, the Annual Appeal was a huge success. Raising more than \$105,000 (exceeding their \$100,000 goal), this amount will be matched dollar for dollar by Passavant Hospital Foundation to purchase a Zeiss Pentero Microscope for UPMC Passavant. This microscope offers a micro-discectomy (similar to arthroscopic) type of surgery for the back and neck. The many advantages of this surgery are that it is minimally invasive, there is less scarring, less risk of infection, a shorter hospital stay and a faster recovery time.

This success could not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of the many volunteers that help with the fundraising. This includes three members of the West View Savings family who have been long time supporters of the Foundation: Debra Andrews, Jonathan Hoover and Bernie Lefke who also serves as the chairperson for this event.

If you would like more information about the Foundation, or would like to make a donation, please contact them at 412-367-6640 or at 9100 Babcock Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15237.

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your credit card debt situation look like? Have you been making sufficient contributions to your Roth or Traditional IRA (even if you have a 401-K plan at work)? If you don't really know or acknowledge where you are, you are counting on luck to make a better financial future, and that doesn't work.

After appraising your finances, set realistic goals. Don't say, "I'm going to save \$10,000 this year". For the average investor, that number is too large and abstract. Instead, resolve to save, say, \$800 a month by increasing contributions to your various savings plans and reducing nonessential expenditures, such as your budget for dining out or the gym membership you rarely use.

### **2. I will diversify my assets -- for real this time.**

Diversifying means holding assets that have little to no correlation with the stock market. Once upon a time, a well-diversified portfolio meant owning a mutual fund with an array of stocks from different sectors. Not anymore. In 2008, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell over 30%. When the market declines that much even a portfolio that includes large-cap U.S. companies, small high-growth companies, international stocks and bonds will take a beating. If as an investor you really can't stomach the market's volatility, then you should consider increasing the bank-insured fixed income portion of your portfolio.

### **3. I will improve my credit.**

The first step to improving your credit is to know where you stand. I recommend that you obtain your credit report in order to have a full picture of your creditworthiness and understand what -- if anything -- could give lenders pause.

You can obtain a free copy of your credit report once every 12 months:

- On-line at [AnnualCreditReport.com](http://AnnualCreditReport.com), which is the only authorized source for consumers to access their annual credit report online for free; or
- Calling (877) 322-8228.

See if there are any mistakes or if you have a bill that just wasn't paid. Make sure to clean up any unpaid bills now.

A better credit rating means banks will charge less to lend to you. For homeowners, that means potentially refinancing at lower interest rates. For those with credit card debt, it means possibly obtaining a card that charges low or zero interest for a time, enabling you to pay off bills more quickly.

The second step to improving your credit is paying off those credit card bills. Prioritizing here is key. Some people will want to tackle the cards with the highest interest rates first. For others, it makes more sense to pay off some of their lower-interest cards in full, enabling them to better organize their debt by reducing the number of creditors to manage.

### **4. I will budget for charitable giving.**

It's easy to forget those less fortunate when you're feeling less fortunate yourself. Please don't. Not only do charitable donations help you save on your taxes, but also helping others can have a positive impact on your psyche and, if enough people donate to domestic causes, the economy.

It is important in times like this to have a grateful heart and a thankful heart for what we have because there are a lot more people worse off than we are. Charities all need volunteers, so it doesn't have to be money. However, if we can make that financial contribution, ultimately, we should.

### **5. I will review my contracts.**

Over the years, the bills you routinely pay for services such as long distance, unlimited mobile phone use and cable TV have likely crept up. Now is the time to renegotiate those contracts. Perhaps you can sign up for a new phone contract with fewer minutes or qualify for special deals that the company is advertising to entice new customers. Companies don't call out of the goodness of their heart and say, "Hey we've got something cheaper". You have to review your contracts.



## SPOTLIGHTING

### ***How Much Debt Should You Have?***



Debt in moderation and used wisely, can help you in meeting your needs and goals. You may not have all the funds you need to purchase that car or improve your home, but borrowing provides that option to you now.

How much debt can you handle? Begin with your gross (before deductions) monthly income (wages, interest, dividends, etc.). Housing related payments should generally not exceed 28% of your gross monthly income. Remember to include all mortgage and home equity loan payments, plus 1/12 of your real estate taxes if your loan payments do not include a monthly escrow. Next, consider all other monthly obligations. These include all other loan (e.g. car, student loan, credit card, etc.) payments. Also, be sure to include monthly child support and alimony payments if applicable. Your total monthly payments – housing related and all other – should generally not exceed 36% of your gross monthly income.

These are general lending guidelines. You may not be comfortable with carrying the maximum amount of debt that you can qualify for, or the maximum loan term available to you. You may want to consider whether you want your payment as low as possible or if you want to pay your loan off in a shorter period (to pay less in total interest).

We can help you answer these questions, by providing advice of which product is best suited for your needs. West View Savings Bank offers a variety of products including Mortgage, Home Equity, Auto, Business/Commercial, Personal loans, and credit cards.

The Loan Division can be reached at (724) 935-7400. Thank you for considering West View Savings Bank.

## **DID YOU KNOW ? ? ? ? ?**

### ***There is New Legislation Affecting Retirement Plans?***

On December 23, 2008, President Bush signed into law H.R. 7327, the Worker, Retiree, and Employer Recovery Act of 2008. Contained in this legislation are a number of changes and technical corrections for IRAs and defined contribution plans (e.g., 401(k), profit sharing, money purchase pension, 403(b), 457(b), SEP, SIMPLE IRA plans).

Some of the key changes include

- waiving Required Minimum Distributions for the 2009 tax year,
- allowing rollovers of certain airline bankruptcy settlement payments to Roth IRAs,
- requiring employer plans to provide a direct rollover option for non spouse beneficiaries,
- eliminating certain restrictions for Roth 401(k)/403(b) rollovers to Roth IRAs.

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## KID'S KORNER



Find the following hidden words:

Valentine, heart, cupid, arrow, candy, love, card, doves, roses, poem

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



 **President's Day** 

February 16, 2009

## From the Passavant Hospital Foundation Kitchen



### Heart-Healthy Recipe: Chicken and Asparagus Tossed With Penne

SERVES 2

#### Ingredients

1 1/2 cups uncooked penne pasta  
 1 cup chopped asparagus  
 6 ounces boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into  
 1-inch cubes  
 2 cloves garlic, minced  
 1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes with herbs,  
 including juice  
 1 ounce soft goat cheese, crumbled  
 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese

#### Directions

Fill a large pot 3/4 full with water and bring to a boil. Add the pasta and cook until al dente (tender), 10 to 12 minutes, or according to the package directions. Drain the pasta thoroughly. Set aside.

In a pot fitted with a steamer basket, bring 1 inch of water to a boil. Add the asparagus. Cover and steam until tender-crisp, about 2 to 3 minutes.

Spray a large nonstick frying pan with cooking spray. Add the chicken and garlic and sauté over medium-high heat. Cook until the chicken is golden brown, about 5 to 7 minutes. Add the tomatoes, including their juice, and simmer 1 minute more.

In a large bowl, add the cooked pasta, steamed asparagus, chicken mixture and goat cheese. Toss gently to mix evenly.

To serve, divide the pasta mixture between 2 plates. Sprinkle each serving with 1/2 tablespoon Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.