

# West View Savings Bank

“Over 100 Years of Quality Banking”

Volume 8, Issue 10

NEWSLETTER

October 2015

## Demystifying Credit Scores

*A Message from our President, David J. Bursic*

### **What is A Credit Score?**

A credit score is a measure of risk based on a person's credit history and indicates how likely they are to repay a loan and make payments on time. People with higher scores are considered lower risk and likely to get better loan terms (lower interest rates) than people with low scores. People with lower scores are considered to be at higher risk for not repaying a loan and therefore don't get the best loan terms (higher interest rates).

### **How Do Credit Scores Work?**

A credit score can range from 300 to 850 depending on the rating agency. Generally, about 35 percent of the score is based on payment history; 30 percent is based on the ratio of outstanding debt to credit available, even if the credit hasn't been used (known as debt-to-credit ratio); 15 percent is based on how long a consumer has had credit; 10 percent is based on the number of inquiries into a report; and 10 percent is based on types of credit.

### **What Is a Good Credit Score?**

A good credit score is generally considered to be above 720. However, this varies depending on which credit bureau awarded the score and which bank is extending the loan offer. The score most commonly used by lenders is FICO, named after Fair Isaac and Company. FICO says its “high achievers” have scores over 785, which is 25

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## Questions and Answers about Chip Technology

### **What is chip technology?**

Also known as EMV (Europay Master Card and Visa) or smart chip technology, it provides added security at chip-enabled store terminals and ATMs. Many countries, and now U.S. merchants and card issuers are using it.

### **How does the chip work?**

When you insert your card at a chip-enabled terminal, the embedded microchip generates unique transaction data each and every time you use it. This makes it difficult for fraudsters to duplicate your account information, which can reduce the risk of fraudulent charges on your account.

### **Where can I use a card with chip technology?**

Use it everywhere you do now. When a retailer updates their terminals to accept chips, just insert your card instead of swiping the magnetic stripe.

### **When do I swipe? When do I insert?**

When in doubt, swipe your card. If the terminal is chip-enabled, it will recognize that your card has a chip and will prompt you to insert instead. Place chip end of card face up into the terminal. Take card out of the terminal when prompted, or after the transaction is complete.

### **Do chip payments require signatures? Or PINs?**

Your card with chip technology is a chip and signature card, which means you may be prompted for a signature to complete the purchase, depending on the transaction. As before, your card only requires a PIN if you request cash at an ATM.

### **Can the chip card be used for contactless or NFC (Near Field Communication) payments?**

No. A card with chip technology requires contact with the terminal's chip reader.

## Six Ways To Boost Your Credit Score

percent of all individuals with credit scores, or more than 50 million individuals. FICO scores range from 300 to 850.

According to credit rating agency Experian, the average U.S. credit score is 750 (VantageScore®) out of a range of 501-990.

The three major credit bureaus (Experian, Equifax and TransUnion) each have their own formula for computing credit scores. This is why you'll often have a different score with each company.

### How Can I Improve My Credit Score?

To improve your credit score:

- Pay your bills on time. Pay at least the minimum due, but paying more is even better.
- Watch for warning signs of credit trouble. If you pay only the minimum balance, pay late or use cash-advances to pay daily living expenses, you might be in the credit "danger zone." For more information on debt management, contact the National Foundation for Credit Counseling ([www.nfcc.org](http://www.nfcc.org)).
- Check your credit report annually. Make sure your credit report is accurate before applying for a loan (such as a mortgage) in order to get the best terms. You can get one free copy of your report each year from each credit reporting agency by calling the Federal Trade Commission at (877) 322-8228 or by visiting [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). If you find errors, dispute them.
- Don't use too much of your available credit. To boost your credit score, try not to use more than about 30 percent of your available credit on any credit card.
- Don't skim—read the fine print. A loan or credit card application is a contract, so read it thoroughly before signing. Be aware of introductory rates that expire, as well as the length of monthly billing cycles.
- Ask questions. If you don't understand the terms of a loan, ask. If you've been denied credit, find out why and then ask the lender how you can improve your chance for approval in the future.
- Set a budget and stick to it. Develop a financial plan to keep your finances in order. Don't spend more than you can repay and don't "max out" your credit cards.
- Comparison shop. Don't jump at the first appealing offer; compare rates and fees offered through mail solicitation, on the Internet or on television. Then call West View Savings Bank for our best loan offer.

Consumers looking for a new place to live should be mindful of the critical impact credit scores can have on their housing options.

"An important step to finding a home, whether you're renting or buying, is ensuring that you have a good credit history," said Frank Keating, ABA president and CEO. "A strong credit score can open doors to better homes and lower mortgage rates."

To make sure you're building a healthy credit history, consider the following tips:

**Request a copy of your credit report** - and make sure it is correct. Your credit report illustrates your credit performance, and it needs to be accurate so that you can apply for other loans - such as a mortgage. Everyone is entitled to receive a free copy of his or her credit report annually for each of the three credit reporting agencies, but you must go through the Federal Trade Commission's website at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com), or call 1-877-322-8228. Note that you may have to pay for the numerical credit score itself.

**Set up automatic bill pay.** Payment history makes up 32 percent of your Vantage Score credit score and 35 percent of your FICO credit score. The more you pay your bills on time, the better your score. Avoid missed payments by setting as many of your bills to automatic pay as possible.

**Keep balances low on credit cards and 'revolving credit.'** Racking up big balances can hurt your scores, regardless of whether you pay your bills in full each month. You often can increase your scores by limiting your charges to 30 percent or less of the credit card's limit.

**Apply for and open new credit accounts only as needed.** Keep this in mind the next time a retailer offers you 10 percent off if you open an account. However, if you need a new line of credit, don't jump at the first appealing offer; compare rates and fees offered through the mail, on the Internet or at your local bank.

**Don't close old, paid off accounts.** According to FICO, closing accounts can never help your score and in fact damage it.

**Talk to credit counselors if you're in trouble.** Using legitimate, non-profit credit counseling can help you manage your debt and won't hurt your credit score. For more information on debt management, contact the National Foundation for Consumer Credit ([www.nfcc.org](http://www.nfcc.org)).



### WEST VIEW SAVINGS BANK

WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2015  
IN OBSERVANCE OF COLUMBUS DAY!



- |                      |              |
|----------------------|--------------|
| West View Office     | 412-931-2171 |
| McCandless Office    | 412-364-1911 |
| Cranberry Office     | 724-776-3480 |
| Sherwood Oaks Office | 724-776-4870 |
| Franklin Park Office | 724-935-7100 |
| Lending Division     | 724-935-7400 |
| Bellevue Office      | 412-761-5595 |

Visit us at [www.wvsbank.com](http://www.wvsbank.com)

## CYSTIC FIBROSIS CAMPAIGN



West View Savings Bank has teamed up with the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation to raise funds and awareness in support of the local patients who fight this disease every day. The 2015 pin-up campaign, taking place at all 5 branch locations, asks customers to donate \$1 or more and write their name on a pin-up that is then displayed inside the bank.

During the summer, customers purchased roses. Throughout the fall there will be pumpkins, and for the month of February there will be valentine hearts. Thanks to the generosity of our customers, West View Savings Bank has been able to raise \$750.00 so far in support of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's mission to find a cure for CF.

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is a genetic, life-threatening disease that affects the lungs and digestive systems of about 30,000 children and adults in the United States. In 1955, people born with CF were not expected to live long enough to attend elementary school. Today, thanks to advancements in research and treatments, many people with cystic fibrosis are living into their 30s, 40s, and beyond.

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation is the world's leader in the search for a cure for cystic fibrosis. The mission of the CF Foundation is to cure cystic fibrosis and to provide all people with the disease the opportunity to lead full, productive lives by funding research and drug development, promoting individualized treatment and ensuring access to high-quality, specialized care.

Thanks to the support of local businesses and individuals, the CF Foundation has been able to invest hundreds of millions of dollars into CF research and drug development. The results of these bold investments have been astonishing. Through these efforts, people with CF are living longer, healthier lives and pursuing dreams they never before thought possible.

To learn more about the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, and how you can get involved, visit <http://wpa.cff.org> or call 412-321-4422.

### NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

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Robin Bemis

## October is the Perfect Time to Catch the Spooktacular Halloween Parade in West View



The West View Halloween Parade will take place on Monday, October 26, 2015 at 7 p.m. Participants receive goodie bags and prizes are awarded. The Halloween Parade is a great tradition that brings the community together. Come and enjoy their creative spirits. Enjoy some hot popcorn provided to the public from the West View Office of West View Savings Bank.

### Telephone Solicitation

The Federal Automated Telephone Consumer Protection Act of 1991 requires any company making a telephone sales call to first consult a list of persons who do not wish to receive such calls. Calling a person on the "don't call" list could result in penalties for the sales firm. In addition, recorded messages may be made to a residence only with the person's consent or in an emergency. Finally, there is a ban on unsolicited fax messages.

Consumers now have new tools to fight back against telephone solicitation calls. In 2002, Pennsylvania launched a statewide Do-Not-Call List, and in 2003, the federal government launched its Do-Not-Call-registry. The programs allow consumers to register their phone numbers to help cut down on calls from telemarketers.

Register for the state do-not-call list by calling 1-888-777-3406 or visiting [www.nocallsplease.com](http://www.nocallsplease.com). Register for the federal do-not-call list by calling 1-888-382-1222 or visiting [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov). It is not necessary for consumers to register for both lists, as both protect consumers from unwanted calls. The state and federal lists are up and running.

Registering your telephone number on either of these lists will help reduce your telemarketing calls, but it will not eliminate them. You may still receive calls from political organizations, charities, telephone surveyors, or companies with which you have an existing business relationship.

Violations of the state list can be reported online or by calling the telemarketing registration line (1-888-777-3406). Violations of the federal law should be reported to the Federal Trade Commission. In order to file a complaint, be sure to obtain the telemarketer's name or phone number.

# KID'S KORNER

## The Clockmaker's Caramel Coated Popcorn (A Haunted Recipe)



In 1921, a German born clockmaker quit his well respected job to open a popcorn stand in Chicago's Wicker Park District. The clockmaker's typical fare was freshly popped popcorn drizzled with warm butter and sprinkled with salt; but his favorite, and most beloved popcorn, was his caramel coated popcorn. The recipe he used to make it was given to him from his only true love, who tragically died four years earlier during World War I. The tattered and torn recipe, which was scribbled on the inside of an old playbill, was carefully framed and sealed in an exquisite frame.

The clockmaker faithfully took the framed recipe with him everywhere he went. By the summer of 1924, the clockmaker's caramel coated popcorn had captivated the entire city's attention; everyone was frantically lining up at his busy stand to buy the sweet, sticky confection. A few months later, just as the clockmaker was preparing to close his stand for the day, a small fire ignited near the stove. The clockmaker instinctively ran out to call for help. When he returned, just seconds later, he remembered leaving the framed recipe hanging on the wall. The clockmaker quickly ran into the burning stand to retrieve the recipe, but he never made it out. When the fire inspectors went into the charred ruins to investigate the accident, they found the clockmaker's frame lying in a pile of smoking debris. The frame was in pristine condition; not a dent, nor a blemish, could be seen on it. However, the recipe was gone.

The recipe for the clockmaker's caramel popcorn recently surfaced and is beginning to circulate around the globe. Unfortunately, many people think the recipe is haunted because it is believed that if your clock stops running after making the recipe it's because the clockmaker has paid you a visit in hopes of reclaiming his long, lost recipe. NOTE: This recipe, as written, results in a sticky, chewy caramel popcorn. If you prefer a crunchier caramel popcorn, bake it in the oven at 250 degrees for 1 hour, stirring every 15 minutes.

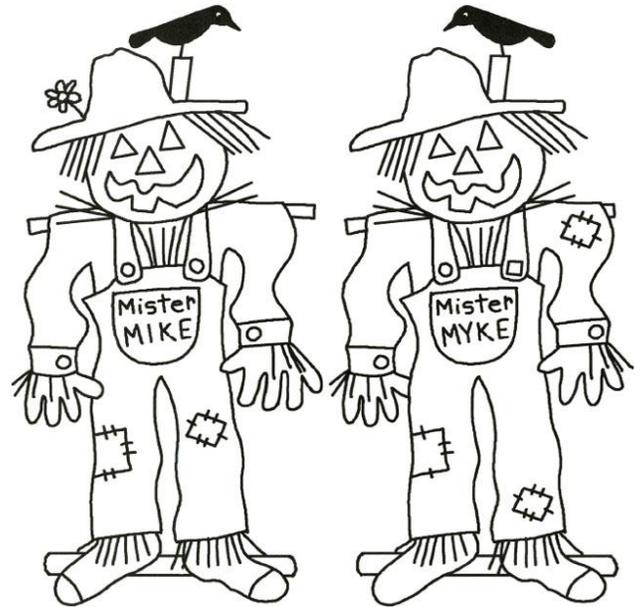
### Ingredients

- 1 cup margarine
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 2 cup Karo syrup
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 10 -15 cups popped popcorn

### Directions

In a LARGE pot, heat margarine, brown sugar, Karo syrup & salt over medium heat. While stirring, bring mixture to a boil. Let boil for five minutes. Remove from heat. Add baking soda and vanilla. Mix well. Pour over freshly popped popcorn. Stir until the popcorn is well coated. Enjoy!

## Spot the 14 Differences



- ACROSS**
2. Halloween's month
  4. She rides a broom
  7. Blind animal that flies at night
  8. Haunted houses are \_\_\_\_\_
  10. What monsters do to you
  12. What ghosts say
  13. The moon comes out at \_\_\_\_\_
- DOWN**
1. What we wear on Halloween
  3. Bird with big eyes that comes out at night
  5. This puzzle is about what holiday
  6. What people give you to eat on Halloween
  9. The sound an owl makes
  11. An animal that says meow

- Answers:
- BAT
  - BOO
  - CANDY
  - CAT
  - COSTUMES
  - HALLOWEEN
  - HOOT
  - NIGHT
  - OCTOBER
  - OWL
  - SCARE
  - SPOOKY
  - WITCH