

# ***Elkhart County Farm Bureau Credit Union*** **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO MEMBERS**

The ELKHART COUNTY FARM BUREAU CREDIT UNION'S (FBCU) primary responsibility is to serve our member-owners. As a member-owned, not-for-profit financial cooperative, FBCU's commitment is to our members. We attempt to provide the very best products and services possible. ***The members' needs are always top priority at FBCU – it is our goal to be their most trusted and valued financial resource.***

At Farm Bureau Credit Union, we consider it a privilege to do business in the communities we serve. In addition, we assume the responsibility of “corporate citizenship” in supporting the many community activities and organizations that lift up the people in need and enhance the quality of life in our communities.

The credit union volunteers, management and staff work to monitor member and community needs and respond with products, services and educational opportunities to meet those needs. It is also our role to communicate the value and perspective a member-owned financial cooperative offers members and potential members. In addition to members and potential members, it is also important to “tell our story” to legislators, regulators and the community at large.

Farm Bureau Credit Union believes in the credit union philosophy of promoting thrift and savings among our members. It is our responsibility to provide tools, resources and consultative services that help enable our members to develop plans for and goals to achieve financial security. We place high importance on consumer education that helps our members achieve their financial goals.

This statement of commitment supports sound business practices that ensure the financial strength and stability of the credit union on behalf of the members we serve. The actions and direction provided by the board of directors and management since FBCU was founded 70 years ago have laid a strong foundation. The decisions and direction have created a financial institution that far exceeds peer ratios in financial soundness and stability. The capital position allows the credit union to return value to the members in the form of higher savings and certificate rates, competitive loan rates, few fees, more office locations and ATMs, investment in technology, and recruitment and retention of a competent and professional staff..

This “Statement of Commitment to Members” is consistent with FBCU's principles of “Not for Profit, Not for Charity, But for Service” and our philosophy of “People Helping People.”

## **I. SERVICE TO MEMBERS**

FBCU strives to offer a wide range of products and services designed to improve the economic and social well-being of our member owners. In today's environment, that includes a mix of personal and technological services in response to a diverse membership's needs.

### **Existing Products and Services:**

- Savings Accounts
- Checking Accounts (no monthly service charge; no minimum balance required)
- MMSA (Money Market Share Account)
- Christmas Club
- Savers Club – to help members save enough to invest in higher return products.
- Kids' Club. Available for children, birth – 18 years; send birthday cards with \$2 bills to all members, provide a summer picnic, Googolplex on the web site.
- Share Certificates
- Traditional and Roth IRA savings accounts and certificates
- Education IRA savings accounts and certificates
- ATM and Debit Cards
- Overdraft Protection
- Direct Deposit
- Automatic Transfer of Funds
- Money Orders
- Cashiers Checks
- Certified Checks
- Travelers Cheques
- Wire Transfers
- Loans – consumer, including mortgage and home equity; agricultural; small business
- Indirect auto dealer relationships
- VISA credit card
- Cash Advance
- Credit Life and Disability insurance
- AD&D insurance products
- Web site at [www.fbcu.com](http://www.fbcu.com)
- MEMBERS CONNECTION touch-tone teller
- MEMBERS LINK home banking services
- MEMBERS Bill Payer
- Student Loans
- Electronic tax filing services
- Notary public
- Safe deposit boxes
- Night depositories
- Series EE and I U.S. Savings Bonds – purchase and redemption
- Elkhart County property tax payments
- Amusement park tickets at discount prices
- MEMBERS Travel Club.
- MEMBERS Financial Services, located at FBCU
  - MEMBERS Financial Network, on line at [www.fbcu.com](http://www.fbcu.com)
  - Manage Personal Finances
    - Set up a household budget
    - Manage your debts

- Reduce your tax burden
- Establish an estate plan
- Plan for retirement
- Manage risks
- Educational programs
- Investment options
- Achieve Financial Goals
  - Financial Management Analysis
  - Individual and SEP IRA programs
  - Mutual funds
  - Fixed and variable annuities
  - Unit investment trusts
  - Universal life insurance
  - Term life insurance
  - Mortgage life insurance
  - Disability insurance
  - Long-term care protection
  - Health insurance
  - Brokerage service

### ***What Makes FBCU Different?***

The products and services listed above are not unlike those offered at many banks, credit unions and thrifts? What makes credit unions different? What makes FBCU different? IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MEMBERS! When the credit union looks at the structure of a product or introduction of a new service, you will often hear, "What's best for our members?" The credit union takes its charge seriously. Our staff is trained to assist members in as they develop strategies to achieve financial security; the credit union's education program offers free seminars to help members learn about technology, home ownership, estate planning, retirement planning, investments and college savings...to name a few. Our loan portfolio is full of personal stories about making nonconforming loans to our Amish members, about making small business loans to members who are "too small" for the banks, but who provide important and needed services in our communities.

### **New Services Planned:**

- E-statements
- Consider providing services for those "outside" the credit union, like check-cashing. The goal will be to help these people move to a credit union relationship.
- Translation of product and service information into Spanish.
- Electronic loan application and approval process
- Registered Member Services Representatives (RMSR) – member services representatives at FBCU offices who will study for and obtain licenses allowing them to process member transactions for many of the products and services offered through MEMBERS Financial Services.

## II. MEMBER EDUCATION

Farm Bureau Credit Union is committed to member and consumer financial education. This education takes the form of financial programs, but also those that educate members, potential members and the community about credit union uniqueness, philosophies and values.

### **Current Programs that Support Member Education and Advocacy:**

- MEMBERS Update, quarterly member newsletter.
- “Financial Fitness” Seminar Series – recent topics including:
  - “Tax Law Changes and IRAs”
  - Estate Planning
  - Investment Basics
  - Home Building, Buying & Financing
- Information and resources on the FBCU web site.
- In partnership with the Consumer Credit Counseling Service, FBCU sponsored “Managing Your Money Workshops” in 2000 and 2001. They were two-hour sessions for four consecutive weeks. FBCU reimbursed fee to all participants who attended all sessions.
- “Internet and E-Mail Basics” – FBCU partnering with MapleTronics Computers – investing \$500 for each of three sessions, plus providing a “light supper” to participants.
- FBCU Web Site offers MEMBERS Financial Network, complete with articles, resources, financial calculators, etc.; Googolplex site for Kids; community and financial links.
- Consumer Credit Counseling. FBCU is a member of the local agency. Andy Gangwer, executive vice president, serves as chairman of the board.
- Employee Orientation and Training. FBCU provides a comprehensive employee orientation program. In addition to the development of job skills, employees are informed about credit union uniqueness and philosophy, products and services, compliance, security and other areas that help ensure a competent and professional staff, positioned to be our members’ “financial consultants.” Ongoing staff education and training also includes monthly meetings, with topics ranging from compliance updates, fraud and security, products and services knowledge, serving members better, etc.

### **New Programs Planned**

- Participation in National Credit Union Youth Week – Lobby displays with informational literature at all FBCU offices.
- A “Socially Responsible Investing” seminar and a “College Savings” seminar in the Fall of 2002.

## III. INVOLVEMENT/GOVERNANCE

FBCU strives to preserve credit union democratic principles, including representation and volunteer participation in credit union activities.

### **Current Programs Supporting Involvement/Governance**

- Annual Meeting. The entire credit union membership is invited to the FBCU Annual Meeting. Pre-meeting publicity includes the newsletter, statement stuffers, lobby posters and point-of-sale pieces, and press releases. The event is held at the local Middle School and includes review of the financial reports, a business session, door prize drawings, a special children's program, family entertainment and refreshments.
- Credit Union Week/Day. The credit union celebrates the "credit union difference" each year during credit union week. We provide information about the credit union movement and specifically about our credit union, FBCU. Lobby posters with a "Did You Know?" theme educate members about the credit union movement in general and Farm Bureau Credit Union in particular. As part of the celebration, we serve refreshments and have giveaways at all our office locations.
- Board of Directors. Seven member board, elected from the membership to three-year terms.
- Annual Board Planning Session and long-range planning.
- Supervisory Committee. Three-member committee, elected from the membership to three-year terms.
- Credit Committee. Two volunteers, appointed by the board of directors.
- Educational Opportunities – volunteers are encouraged to participate in educational activities and programs.

### **New Programs Planned:**

## **IV. DIVERSITY**

Farm Bureau Credit Union operates as a member-owned, democratically and locally controlled financial cooperative. Credit Union volunteers, management and staff bring a variety of backgrounds to help ensure diversity in the leadership and staff. In addition, the credit union works to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse membership base.

### **Current Programs**

- Farm Bureau Credit Union is an equal opportunity employer.
- Farm Bureau Credit Union is an equal opportunity lender.
- The credit union makes efforts to serve the underserved.
- SEGs – Select Employee Groups. The credit union reaches out into the communities we serve, one of the ways being the increase in SEGs.
- Ethnic Festival at Goshen College -- \$2,000 major sponsor support for the last three years and including 2002.

### **New Programs Planned**

- Translation of some brochures, informational pieces and applications to meet a growing Hispanic member base.

## **V. COMMITMENT TO THE CREDIT UNION MOVEMENT AND OTHER COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES.**

Farm Bureau Credit Union embraces the cooperative spirit in its dealings and relationships within the credit union movement – involving other credit unions as well as local, state and national cooperative activities. It is imperative that credit unions work together to ensure a successful future for the credit union movement, credit unions and especially the members we serve.

### **Current Activities that Support the Credit Union Movement:**

- St. Joe Valley Chapter. The credit union takes an active role in the St. Joe Valley Chapter of credit unions, by dues support, attending meetings and other chapter activities, and sponsoring a meeting each year. FBCU has been represented on the board of directors for the last several years.
- FBCU participates in the shared branch network in Indiana. The credit union was a charter member of the Credit Union Centers of North Central Indiana in 1995 and Sanford Miller served on the board of directors, three years as president.
- Alliance One ATM network. The credit union is a member of this reciprocal organization, which offers members surcharge-free ATM access at thousands of locations.
- Indiana Credit Union League – President Jack Sheets is a member of the Governmental Affairs Council and attends regular meetings.
- CUNA – President Jack Sheets regularly participates in the national Governmental Affairs Conference, held each year in Washington, D.C.
- The Credit Union is a member of the Filene Research Institute and President Jack Sheets sits on the Institute's national Research Council.
- President Jack Sheets sits on the Advisory Board of American Share Insurance, the deposit insurer of FBCU and other credit unions across the country.
- Cooperative Financial Association (CFA). This organization is made up of the 13 credit unions in Indiana originally founded through the Farm Bureau organization. The credit union is customarily represented in leadership roles and attendance at the semi-annual business/educational sessions.
- FBCU has “opened its doors” to other credit unions for assistance and observation. The loan department coordinator has provided training to several area credit unions on the mortgage platform.
- For several years, Farm Bureau Credit Union has provided financial support to various credit union movement initiatives, such as national branding campaigns, political efforts and cash contributions.
- Farm Bureau Credit Union is one of the leading credit unions in Indiana in the coin sale program, which helps raise funds for the Political Action Committees at both the state and national levels. We are proactive, investing funds to purchase lobby display cases that help promote the coin sales. In addition, we often purchase coins and donate them as door prizes to a variety of organizations.

### **New Programs Planned:**

- The CUSO has entered into an agreement with a smaller credit union to provide MEMBERS Financial Services and Educational Seminars to its members.

## **VI. PUBLIC SERVICE/CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP**

FBCU is proud of its ability to contribute to the people who live in and around and the communities we serve. Through donations of staff/volunteer time and talents, financial and in-kind contributions and participation in the work of worthwhile public and private organizations, FBCU helps make a positive impact. Many times, our members join beside the credit union's volunteers and staff to make our projects more successful than we could have imagined.

- Chambers of Commerce. FBCU is an active member of the Chambers in the communities we serve, often assuming leadership positions and involved in various committees. In addition, FBCU participates in events and offers financial support to these organizations.
  - FBCU sponsored a Leadership Breakfast in March 2002, to honor the retiring Superintendent of Schools and introduce the incoming Superintendent to the business community.
- Holiday Service Project
  - The credit union raises literally thousands of dollars in money and items, helps create awareness of organizations and the clientele they serve.
  - FBCU has been awarded the Dora Maxwell Award for Social Responsibility for the last four years at the state level and has received honorable mention at the national level on two separate occasions.
- Dollars for Scholars – Four \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors – awarded in the high schools in which we have offices. Criteria states that the award should go to those who exemplify the credit union “people helping people” philosophy.
- Boys and Girls Club. Annual auction, service project, staff member sits on the board of directors.
- Child Abuse Prevention Services – CAPs – long-time monetary and commodity support.
  - Each year the credit union is one of the sites for the CAPS “Lifesaver Campaign” fundraiser.
- Shop-With-A-Cop. FBCU staff member active with this event.
- Family Christian Development Center.
- Salvation Army. Support annual Pancake Day and other projects.
- Elkhart County Family Services/Elkhart County Women's Shelter. President Jack Sheets sits on the board at Family Services. Offer monetary donations and service project recipient.
- Bashor Children's Home. Service project recipient, monetary donations; have sponsored Christmas parties for the residents.
- Elkhart County 4-H Fair and 4-H programs. 4-H livestock auction, “Farmstead of Yesteryear” underwriter, sponsor “Barnball” at the fair; co-sponsor of 4-H Leader Banquet; pay for all 4-H pins in Elkhart County.
- Church Support. Offer support to churches and parochial schools.

- School programs and presentations. Fire prevention and drug awareness program support; Junior Achievement; provide speakers and participants in a variety of classroom settings; support student athletes and athletic programs; arts and music support;
- FBCUnited – response to the 9/11 tragedies. FBCU corporation, staff and members joined to contribute \$6,000.
- Riley Children’s Hospital. Through Fairfield High School event.
- Oaklawn Mental Health facility. Help sponsor annual fund-raising gala.
- Greencroft Senior Center. Provide financial support at golf outings, annual gala, and other events.
- Goshen College
  - Support Michiana Student Aid Fund
  - Pledge to help fund new Music Building -- \$10,000 total
  - ATM on campus
  - Help underwrite athletic scholarship golf outing
- Service Clubs
  - Rotary – Two FBCU employees
  - Kiwanis – Three FBCU employees
  - Optimists – One FBCU employee
- Fairfield Food Pantry
- Interfaith Hospitality Network – Goshen organization for the homeless
- Wakarusa Maple Syrup Festival
- Millersburg Farmers Day
- Goshen Sidewalk Days – Serve hot dogs and lemonade, with all “donations” going to a local organization.
- Student Athlete Support – Donations and support to Little Leagues, game broadcasts, Sports Boosters, Sports programs.
- YMCA
- American Cancer Society. Monetary support and participation in “Daffodil Days.”
- Support the Arts – Goshen Community Theatre, school arts programs, Community Chorale, etc.
- Goshen Mennonite Relief Sale – help underwrite “Run for Relief” and other support.
- American Heart Association – Leadership roles, participation and monetary support for annual “Heart Walk” event.
- American Red Cross – FBCU Branch Manager sits on the board.
- AG Council – FBCU VP sits on the board. Organization promoting agriculture in Elkhart County.
- Goshen River Race Committee. Jack Sheets and Sanford Miller both serve on the committee, which is working to redevelop a portion of the Goshen downtown area.

### **New Programs Planned**

- In addition to continued and ongoing support of the many causes and organizations listed above, the credit union will be called upon to meet new needs identified in our communities.
- FBCU, the Elkhart County Exchange Club and Silverwood Mennonite Church are working together to raise \$45,000 to build the 100<sup>th</sup> Habitat for Humanity House in

Elkhart County, scheduled for construction in Spring, 2003. Celebrating the spirit of service and volunteerism, it will be known as “Pete’s House.” It is in honor of Pete Larimer, one of the seven charter members at FBCU and a volunteer who served on the board for 51 years. He was also active in the club, the church, Habitat for Humanity and countless other organizations. Pete passed away in March of this year.

## **SUMMARY**

Anyone can make a “statement of commitment.” It is vision and action that give a commitment credibility and value. At Farm Bureau Credit Union, we believe it is important to give life to the words -- to “walk the talk” in the products and services we provide and in the way we serve our members. We believe that we are also part of a “bigger picture” in the credit union movement. And, we believe we need to give back to our communities for the privilege of doing business. The difference shows.

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