



NEWSLETTER



2022 Award-Winning Credit Union

Credit Union National Association (CUNA) Diamond Winner in the following categories:

Annual Report | Ongoing Events | Multifaceted Campaign
Commercial Video | 'Best in Category' Business Development Effort

1. **Best Credit Union in Cheyenne (7th Consecutive Year)**
Wyoming Tribune Eagle's Readers' Choice Awards
2. **Best Mortgage Lending Company**
Wyoming Tribune Eagle's Readers' Choice Awards
3. **Best Bank/Credit Union in Grand County (CO)**
4. **Great Place to Work Certified®**
5. **3rd Place for Best Credit Union** as voted by readers of *Best of NOCO*

Blue Federal Credit Union Board of Directors

The deadline for filing an application to be considered for a Board position has expired. Information submitted by nominees will be made available to the members of the credit union in the spring newsletter, during the weeks preceding, and on the day of the annual meeting. We will announce the selected Board Members at the annual meeting in June 2023.

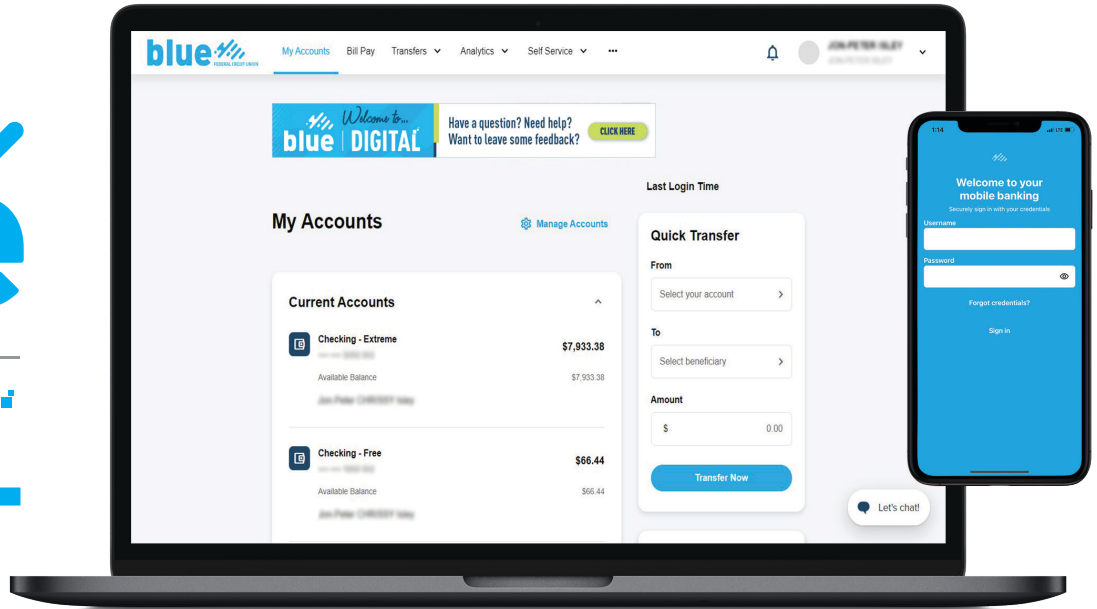
The credit union bylaws do not provide for nominations from the floor; however, nominations for vacancies can be made by petition. Nominations by petition must be signed by at least 500 members.

The petition must be filed with the Board Secretary, Jeffie Wiggins-McMullen, at 2401 E. Pershing Blvd., Cheyenne, WY 82001, no later than Friday, February 3, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. (MST). Each nominee by petition must submit to the Secretary, at the time of filing the petition, a brief statement of qualification and biographical data.





blue DIGITAL



Blue Digital coming soon!

An all-new Online & Mobile Banking experience

As your lifelong champion, we're excited to share an update coming to Blue's online and mobile banking experience — the new Blue Digital.

We've been listening and thanks to your feedback we've completely re-designed the platform! Our team has been hard at work to elevate Blue's online and mobile banking experience with an enhanced look and new and exciting features.

We're releasing the update to our members slowly, so watch for information in your email in the coming months.

In the update, you'll notice changes to the layouts and features - but don't panic! Our team is working diligently to create helpful tips and tricks for you to transition to the new platform. And better yet? Our talented team of representatives will still be available to assist and answer questions.

We're really excited about this first step into the future of Blue Digital and being able to help you best discover pathways to realize your possibilities. We couldn't do it without your support.

Visit bluefcu.com/digital to learn more!

To receive timely information, please verify your contact information with us.

Please verify the following information is up to date with a Blue Representative:

- Phone Number
- Email Address
- Mailing Address

How to verify and update:

- Login to your mobile or online banking, go to 'Settings' Tab to verify your information
- If you need to make any changes:
 - Select the 'Messages' Tab and send a secure message or,
 - Visit a convenient branch location or,
 - Call our call center, 1-800-368-9328





Navigating through uncertain times

How to protect yourself in a wild economy
By Neal Weber, Chief Financial Officer



You walk up to the counter, but you're already filled with dread. You've been feeling the sticker shock of rising prices for groceries, gas, and utilities, but this pain seemed to have slipped your mind in the spirit of the holidays. As the cashier rings up your purchase, you flinch as your suspicions are confirmed: the same turkey that cost \$22.93 last year is now \$28.96, an increase of 21%! You pay the cashier and shuffle out of the store, your spirit dampened a bit. Sound familiar?

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF?

According to most forecasts, inflation is expected to gradually fall over the next 18-24 months before returning to normal sometime in 2024. It's important to remember, though, that a falling inflation rate is still inflation. In other words, a *fall in the rate of inflation* is not the same as a *fall in prices*. While a handful of products may experience falling prices, most will continue to see price increases for the foreseeable future, although the rate of increase may slow.

Because of this, it is generally preferable to purchase major items today if you can afford to do so. Major purchases include things like automobiles and homes, as well as durable goods such as washers, dryers, and kitchen appliances. Because prices are likely to rise, purchasing now is generally a less expensive option if you can afford it.

To reduce expenses today, many recommend looking at opportunities to trim discretionary spending to free up more of your budget for necessities. Further, you could try purchasing generic products rather than pricier name

brands. Depending on your situation, you could also benefit by negotiating cable or insurance bills, resulting in savings that can protect you against rising prices elsewhere. By freeing up space within your budget, you will be better able to weather whatever the future may bring.

Beyond spending concerns, a bit less obvious is the impact of inflation on your savings balances. While inflation will not reduce the balance of your savings, rising prices serve to reduce the purchasing value of those savings whenever they are needed in the future. Planning for things like retirement, a child's college, or even future vacations becomes much more difficult in an inflationary environment.

With this context, be sure to evaluate your savings to ensure you are earning the best return possible. Look to structure your accounts by utilizing products such as certificates of deposit (CDs) or term shares that typically pay higher rates. Laddering termed products across multiple time horizons, from short- to long-term, will enable you to earn a higher return that better keeps pace with inflation. Most financial institutions, including Blue, offer tailored products to meet your needs.

Also be sure to keep a portion of your savings in a liquid account as a buffer against emergencies. If you do not have an emergency fund today, consider starting one. The Accelerated Savings product from Blue is designed to reward you for starting your savings journey.

It may also make sense to contact your financial advisor and review your investment portfolio within the context of the current environment. Financial advisors are trained to help you through challenging times like these and will ensure you are best positioned within your preferred level of risk, all in a diversified way. You should also regularly review the risk tolerance of your portfolio to be sure it is consistent with your investing goals.

As interest rates rise, also be sure to evaluate any outstanding debt. Consider paying down high-interest, variable-rate debt first to protect yourself from the rising rate environment. Balance transfer campaigns can be a great opportunity to lower credit card rates and keep debt balances from spiraling out of control. Tools such as the "debt snowball" can also be effective for ridding yourself of higher-interest debt. If you are looking to purchase a vehicle or home, consider something a bit less expensive to offset the higher cost of borrowing. Be sure to not put yourself in a situation in which your monthly payments may become more than you can afford if prices on goods and services continue to rise rapidly.

Most importantly, ensure you have a relationship with a financial partner like Blue that will support your lifetime financial needs.

As a not-for-profit financial cooperative, we exist to serve you in both good times and bad. Please reach out and engage with us if you're ready to discover pathways to realize your possibilities.





blue | FOUNDATION

The Blue Foundation is doing good in our communities by giving back to non-profits in need. Blue Federal Credit Union can choose to match all donations to the foundation to maximize your support. Visit the Blue Foundation website to donate today, bluefoundation.blue/donate.

During 2022, the Foundation granted over \$213,000.

Following are a few of the recipients:

- Unaccompanied Students Initiative
- Boys & Girls Club of Larimer County
- Children’s Museum of Cheyenne
- Homeward Alliance
- My Front Door
- Casa Ventosa Rescue, Inc
- Realities for Children
- Give Next, Community Foundation of Northern Colorado



Thankful Thursday is a fundraising party with dinner, games, 50/50 raffle, a chance to win money, and a live auction to raise money for Blue Foundation. This will take place on Thursday April 13, 2023 at the Lincolnway Event Center in Cheyenne, located at 3839 E Lincolnway. We invite all members and their friends, 21 and over to attend.



Prime Time Club

The Prime Time Club is for members age 50 and finer. Events for active Prime Time members are posted on our website as they become available at bluefcu.com/events. To receive updated information about these events please join the Active Prime Time group online, bluefcu.com/belong/member-benefits, or email primetime@bluefcu.com. We ask that anyone interested in a Prime Time event to please RSVP online.



2023 Foundation Scholarship Applications Now Available

The Myrtle Knight Memorial Scholarship powered by the Blue Foundation is accepting new applications from graduating senior high school students. **Six deserving seniors will receive scholarships for \$2,000 each.**

Eligible, applicants must:

- Be a member of the credit union with a Share Savings account in their own name.
- Be graduating in the spring of the current school year and planning to attend college full time during the fall term.
- Use the scholarship at any accredited school of higher learning, including four-year colleges, two-year junior or community colleges, and accredited trade schools.

Visit bluefoundation.blue/scholarships to apply online. Applications must be submitted by April 1, 2023.

Winners will be notified by mail in the early part of May and announced during Blue’s Annual Meeting and in our summer newsletter.

Another scholarship opportunity available exclusively for Blue members, is the Shirley Howard - Blue Foundation business scholarship at Laramie County Community College (LCCC) in Cheyenne Wyoming. Contact the LCCC financial aid office for more information.





New Year Resolutions to help keep you safe from scams!

- **Don't click it!**

If you don't know the sender, aren't expecting a message with a link or attachment, or just aren't sure a link is safe to click, don't click it. Instead, contact the sender independently of the received message and ask about it.

- **Don't react quickly to any message whether text, voice, or email that threatens something bad may happen if you don't.**

Take a breath. Go to your financial institution's website or app and log in there. Never click links in messages for financial related details.

- **Don't send information if you didn't initiate the phone call to your financial institution, don't send information.**

Instead, log in to your account using the app or the bank's official website and check on your accounts. Making a quick phone call using a number you find or know also works. Don't use information sent to you in unsolicited messages.



Important Tax Tip

The IRS wants everyone to know that they will not ask for personal details in a text or email message. They will never ask for account numbers or your social security or taxpayer ID using these methods. In fact, if the agency needs to contact you, it will send you a letter on actual paper, using the U.S. Postal Service as a first method of communication.





Introducing Blue's Virtual Teller Machines (VTMs)

At Blue Federal Credit Union, we're dedicated to building authentic connections with our members. As banking technology changes, we know members may worry about getting trapped in an automated, detached system. But members don't have to worry about that at Blue. Our dedication to connecting with you is why we're revolutionizing our ATM systems and switching to Virtual Teller Machines (VTMs) at our branch locations.

What is a Virtual Teller Machine?

You may have noticed that some of our branches no longer have traditional drive-up teller windows. Instead, you pull up to a Blue branded ATM with a touch screen. These high-tech machines are our new VTMs. You might be wondering - how is a VTM different from an ATM?

Think of a VTM as a local Blue branch in a box. It combines the simplicity and functionality of an ATM with the personalized connection of the teller window - except better. When you roll up to one of Blue's VTMs, you can speak with a team member located at our World Headquarters in Cheyenne, WY through a video conference call instead of through an intercom and receive the same personalized service, just like you would inside any of our branches.

What Can You Do With a Virtual Teller Machine?

With Blue's VTMs, members can confidently conduct most of their banking business without losing the authentic connection we pride ourselves on here at Blue. VTMs allow services like:

- Withdrawing cash - with higher withdrawal limits than ATMs.
- Depositing or cashing checks.
- Conducting transfers of funds.
- Making loan and credit card payments.
- Opening new checking or savings accounts.

How Do You Use a VTM?

To speak to a teller, simply touch the screen and a Blue team member will appear for assistance via video conferencing. To use the machine as an ATM, simply insert your card for account access, use a keypad, and navigate a touchscreen like an ATM. If the card is inserted before touching the screen, the machine will assume an ATM transaction, and without closing that transaction out, will not be able to push a button to connect to a teller.

VTM FAQs

• Will I Speak with a Local Blue Team Member?

Yes! Our members will speak with local Blue Team Members located in our World Headquarters in Cheyenne, WY during their video calls.

• What Are the VTM Hours?

The ATM function of the VTMs is available to our members 24/7. However, video conferencing is only available during regular business hours.

• Do VTM Transactions Take Longer?

VTM transactions take the same amount of time as in-branch transactions. Often, VTM transactions are faster than in-branch.

• What Can't VTMs Do?

VTMs are versatile machines that can take care of most banking services and needs for our members. But at Blue, we aren't just a credit union. We're committed to creating achievable pathways for our members through individualized financial guidance. Our in-branch team members are ready to help you with more in-depth consultations or services more suited to in-person assistance than VTM services.

We know VTMs are new to many of our members. For additional questions, please visit with a Blue employee at your local branch or by calling **1-800-368-9328** for personalized help to realize your possibilities!





We are excited for four building projects currently happening!



New Branch Location - Superior Marketplace - Superior, CO

Located near the newly remodeled Target and Costco Stores in Superior, CO, the Blue Federal Credit Union Branch at 400 Center Drive is conveniently located for all southeastern Boulder County residents. This location serves members in Louisville, Superior, Southeast Boulder, and Southwest Broomfield. The building was fully renovated to be uniquely Blue internally and externally. On the outside, the building

is sporting a new roof, stucco, and modern colors. The drive-thru lanes will have two new Video Teller Machines (VTMs) to provide full video teller services for all your banking needs. Nancy Krueger (Branch Manager) and her team are excited to start providing services to all new and existing members in the area. **The Official Grand Opening Celebration will be Saturday, January 21, 2023!**



Newly Renovated Branch - 7th Avenue - Cheyenne, WY

Re-Grand Opening Event - Thursday, February 9th, 2023. Blue's flagship branch has been completely remodeled! The exterior of the branch has received a modern face-lift with new stone and a stylish color palette. The entire interior of the branch will reflect Blue's current branch and brand standards with a large comfortable lobby area with a gas fireplace, seating, and coffee bar. We make every effort to create an atmosphere that will ensure our members the best possible experience in addressing their financial planning. For convenient drive-up service, there are two new Video Teller Machine (VTM) lanes that offer the highest level of customer

service for all your financial needs. Annette Crosby (Branch Manager) and her team are excited to be back in the space and show it off to members! Of the building's total 12,000 square feet, 5,900 square feet will continue to serve as the Blue Federal Credit Union Branch offering banking, loans, mortgages, and investment opportunities. The remainder of the space will offer two leasable office spaces. Suite 1 offers 2,065 sq ft while Suite 2 will have available 2,187 sq ft. Tenants will begin occupying the space in January of 2023.





We are excited for four building projects currently happening!



Future Branch Location – Sweetgrass Village Center – Cheyenne, WY

The Sweetgrass Blue Federal Credit Union will be easily accessible to all current and future Southern Cheyenne Members. Positioned just south of Laramie County Community College, this branch will provide professional/friendly banking services to this fast-growing community in the Sweetgrass Development of southern Cheyenne. Blue is working on the building architecture and site development, and we are looking

forward to the opportunity to break ground as soon as this complex process is completed. Once built, Blue Sweetgrass will be in an ideal location to discover pathways to realize possibilities to all existing members, the college community, and the future residents in this growing neighborhood.



*Rendering not finalized

Future Branch Location – Loveland, CO

We are excited to announce our newest branch location in Loveland, CO. This branch will be a welcome addition to our northern Colorado Members in the Loveland and West Greeley area. Blue will begin renovations of an existing building this summer. This will be a full-service Branch providing banking, loans, mortgages, and investment services. The branch, like our other locations, will reflect our warm/welcome interior and friendly/knowledgeable team professionals. The exterior will be distinctly Blue and

will project our fresh, exciting new look. This location, like our other newly remodeled branches, will have convenient VTM/ATM lanes for outstanding services from the comfort of your vehicle. You will notice that at many of our existing and new locations we are expanding the widths of our drive-thru lanes to allow easier access for all types and sizes of personal vehicles. Blue is excited to become an active member of the Loveland community.





Exciting Changes Coming to Blue's Individual Retirement Arrangement (IRA) Program

Blue believes that saving for retirement shouldn't be complex and frustrating. We are making changes to our IRA program to facilitate simplicity and ease of use. Currently, we offer several different fixed term shares with various rates and maturity schedules, which can make it seem like there are more than one IRA account and may cause extra confusion/stress when adding savings to your retirement. Soon, we will only offer one fixed term share account that will mature every five years. It will offer the best rate possible and will allow additional deposits and withdrawals when necessary. Every IRA account will also have a tiered money market which will be used for those funds not deposited into a fixed term share account. As always, we look forward to serving you and discovering pathways to realize your possibilities!



LOAN PAYMENT OPTIONS

As a member of Blue, you have several options for making your loan payments.

Visit a Blue Branch or Shared Branch Location

- Check – no fee
- Cash – no fee
- Blue to Blue transfer – no fee
- Credit Card at a Blue branch - \$12.50

Pay through your online banking login

- Blue to Blue transfer – no fee
- Setup and ACH transfer using Money Mover – no fee

“Make a Loan Payment” at bluefcu.com

- ACH or Credit/Debit card – \$12.50
- ACH with AutoPay - \$0.50 per transaction

Call our Member Relationship Contact Center representatives

- Setup an AutoPay ACH payment – no charge
- ACH or Credit/Debit card – \$12.50
- Use the Automated Phone System - \$10.00

You may also mail your payment directly to us at:
2401 E. Pershing Blvd. Cheyenne, WY 82001





RATE *Riser*

Special New Money Term Share Certificate

The Rate Riser Term Share Certificate follows the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and is evaluated monthly. The rate will never lower but will rise as the CPI rises.

INTRO RATE 4.25% APY*

22-Month Term Share Certificate | \$5,000 Minimum Deposit

*Annual Percentage Yield. For full details speak with a Blue Representative or go to bluefcu.com/rateriser



Upcoming Holiday Hours

Martin Luther King Jr. Day – January 16th

All branches are closed.

Presidents Day – February 20th

All branches are closed.



2023

**WISHING YOU A
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

