



President's Message



Got Loans?

With all the media attention focused on the “big banks” and the government’s call for increased lending to help stimulate the economy, you might think that a loan is hard to come by. Not so.

As was recently pointed out by Dan Forte, President of the Massachusetts Bankers Association, community banks like The Savings Bank have no place in the recession blame game. Rather, like other community banks, The Savings Bank is part of the solution. We did not offer “sub-prime” loans nor did we offer exotic mortgages, both of which have contributed to the current economic storm. It is important to distinguish between local, community based and community focused banks and the giant Wall Street firms that had a hand in the current financial meltdown.

In 2008 The Savings Bank originated \$39.1 million in residential loans and our residential loan portfolio grew by more than fifteen percent. Of the \$39.1 million in residential loans, \$11.4 million was originated just for first-time homebuyers. We originated \$2.4 million in consumer loans (auto, secured, and unsecured loans) and that portfolio grew by almost six percent.

Commercial Real Estate loans originated at The Savings Bank during 2008 totaled \$24.2 million and our commercial real estate loan portfolio grew by more than thirty-three percent. We also originated \$3.8 million in commercial and industrial (“C&I”) non-real estate loans.

Overall, our loan portfolio grew by almost 20% in 2008. We lend in the communities we work and live in. Access to funding for home purchases, a new car, a business building, or new equipment is important to our local families and businesses – and that makes it important to us.

The national and local economies have gotten off to a rough start in 2009. Interest rates are historically low but both individuals and businesses are concerned about saving and reducing debt. The Savings Bank stands ready to provide funding to those looking to borrow money. We’ve been proudly doing this for almost 140 years through busts and booms.

Got Loans? Absolutely. Visit us at www.tsbawake24.com, give us a call, or stop in to talk with us in person. We’re here to help and to answer your questions.

You may also call me directly at 781-224-5428.

Brian D. McCoubrey
President and Chief Executive Officer

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Sign up to receive your statement online today by calling **1-800-246-2009** or visit us online at www.tsbawake24.com

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TSB Community News

The Savings Bank is proud to have been serving the community for 140 years. We thought you'd like to see how we are helping out.

1st Quarter Sponsorships & Donations:

Andover ABA
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CSF Trivia Challenge
Epilepsy Chapter of Wakefield
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Middlesex Concert Band
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Vocational School
Stoneham Theatre
Sweetser Lecture Series
Wakefield Babe Ruth League
Wakefield Little League
Wakefield Rotary

FFT Financial Planner Guertin Named Among Top Financial Advisers

Walter Guertin, CFP®, CPA/PFS, CSA, a financial planner at First Financial Trust of Newton, a subsidiary of The Savings Bank, has been recognized by *BusinessWeek* as one of the top ranking 50 independent financial advisers in the country according to the Paladin Registry, a service that ranks financial advisers for individual investors.

Walter Guertin has more than 30 years of experience in the financial services industry, and works with clients in all aspects of their personal finances, with particular emphasis on retirement, tax and estate planning. Prior to joining First Financial, Walter was a principal with Legacy Financial Services, Inc., a personal financial planning and investment firm. He also served as Senior Vice President for the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston and was an auditor with the international accounting firm of Price Waterhouse & Co.

First Financial Trust, a subsidiary of The Savings Bank, provides Investment Management, Financial Planning, Trust Administration, and Estate Settlement Services, as well as Retirement and Profit Sharing Plan Fund Management, and Non-profit and Endowment Fund Management.



Walter Guertin,
CFP®, CPA/PFS, CSA
Senior Vice President,
Financial Planning

Survival Strategies for Small Business During a Down Market

Larry Andrews, (standing, right) Senior Vice President - Senior Commercial Banking Officer at The Savings Bank, was among the panelists at the recent quarterly meeting of the Reading-North Reading Chamber of Commerce. The meeting, "Survival Strategies for Small Businesses During a Down Market," featured each panelist's strategy from their respective area of business, followed by an interactive question and answer session.



Featured speakers included (seated, left to right) Vinnie Cameron, General Manager of the Reading Municipal Light Department; Eric Evans, Edward Jones Financial (North Reading); Attorney Doug Mercurio, Law Office of Douglas M. Mercurio, (North Reading). (Standing, left to right) Irene Collins, Executive Director of the Reading-North Reading Chamber of Commerce; John Douglass, Chamber President; Sheila Smith, Sage Financial (Reading); Erin Calvo-Bacci, The Chocolate Truffle (Reading); Dave O'Neil, Century 21 Spindler & O'Neil (North Reading); Larry Andrews, The Savings Bank.

Sources of Help and Information on Managing Your Money

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation has staff and other resources that can answer questions about deposit insurance and banking. If you have a complaint involving an individual institution that you are unable to resolve directly with the institution, you may contact the FDIC or another government regulator for assistance.

Start at www.fdic.gov/quicklinks/consumers.html or call toll-free 1-877-ASK-FDIC (1-877-275-3342). Information specialists are available 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time), Monday through Friday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday.

Other federal, state and local government agencies also publish consumer information and have staff, websites and other resources that can help answer questions on financial matters.

For information on money management go to www.mymoney.gov, the federal government's central website about managing your money. Its tips from the FDIC and other government agencies include suggestions for dealing with job loss, mortgage problems and other financial concerns during difficult times.

For additional information from the U.S. government on money management, go to www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Money_Taxes.shtml or call toll-free 1-800-FEDINFO (1-800-333-4636).

Source:
FDIC Consumer News Winter2008/2009

Good Ways to Get Started Cutting Back

It's always smart to control your spending. But if you or others in your family are facing difficult times financially, perhaps from a job loss or wage cuts, it is especially important to spend less so you can have more money to pay essential bills or to add to a savings account you can tap in an emergency. Here are some strategies.

Take a serious look at your spending. As a first step, think about creating a spending plan, commonly known as a budget. Make a list of your monthly expenses divided into two groups — your “needs” and your “wants.” The needs are expenses that are absolutely necessary, such as your housing, utilities, clothes, food and transportation. The wants are optional purchases.

“After you differentiate between spending for needs and splurging on wants, cut back on the second category, especially if you're already suffering an income loss or other financial hardship,” said Luke W. Reynolds, Chief of the FDIC's Community Affairs Outreach Section. He said possible places to cut back on unnecessary spending include restaurant meals, monthly subscriptions and premium TV channels.

But also consider opportunities to save on your necessities. Examples from experts and consumers alike: Try carpooling or taking public transportation to work instead of driving by yourself. If you have multiple cars, see if you can live without one of them. Ask yourself if you really need those \$200 sneakers or if a less expensive pair will do just fine. Buy used instead of new. Take better care of what you buy so it will last longer. And, make your own coffee at home and bring your lunch to work instead of eating out.

Finally, don't use your credit cards or other loan products to buy things you really can't afford. For more tips about borrowing money, visit www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news on You Can Get a Good Loan and Your Credit Score.

Keep banking costs down. “Look at the most costly fees and recurring charges on your bank and credit card statements and consider how you can reduce or eliminate them,” Reynolds said. Among the possibilities: If you routinely pay bank fees, shop for a different account that meets your needs at a lower cost. Also review your banking habits to cut unnecessary fees. For example, use

your own bank's ATMs for cash withdrawals instead of going elsewhere and paying a surcharge, and keep close tabs on your checking account balance to avoid bounced checks, which can be costly.

Likewise, ask your credit card lender to consider lowering your interest rate, particularly if you have a relatively good payment history and could qualify for a lower rate elsewhere. Also pay as much as you can as soon as you can. It will mean you'll pay less interest and avoid late fees.

And if you have a mortgage and you expect to continue to own your home for the foreseeable future, see if you can save money by refinancing to get a lower interest rate and a lower monthly payment after also weighing the up-front costs of refinancing. “Refinancing your mortgage or auto loan can save you money over the coming years that you can put to better use in a savings account or paying off other debt,” said Mary Bass, FDIC Senior Community Affairs Specialist.

Be careful before cutting insurance coverage. It's important to have adequate insurance, especially for life, health, disability, personal liability, and coverage of property. “While it's a good idea to review your insurance coverage every year or so and not carry more coverage than necessary, think twice before trying to save money by dropping insurance coverage,” added Bass. “All it takes is one illness or auto accident to realize the importance of having adequate insurance.”

The bottom line: Cutting back on an already tight budget may seem daunting, but you can find ways to spend less without sacrificing your quality of life. For more ideas on ways to cut spending, see articles in back issues of FDIC Consumer News online at www.fdic.gov/consumernews, as well as tips from “66 Ways to Save” at www.66ways.org. For suggestions on how to put your savings to good use, including in an emergency savings account, see [www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/ 7 Tips on Putting Your Dollars to Work...for You!](http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/7_Tips_on_Putting_Your_Dollars_to_Work...for_You!)

Source: *FDIC Consumer News*
Winter 2008/2009

Can you benefit from a Reverse Mortgage?

A reverse mortgage allows you to turn the equity in your home into the cash you need now. If you are 62 years of age or older and own your home, you very well may be eligible to enjoy the benefits of a Reverse Mortgage.

Receive the proceeds in one lump sum, as a regular monthly payment or as a line of credit available whenever you need it

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- No Monthly Payments
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Call our Reverse Mortgage Specialist, Chris Grevelis at 781-224-5365 to learn more about how a Reverse Mortgage may benefit you or someone you know.



Chris Grevelis,
Reverse Mortgage
Specialist



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