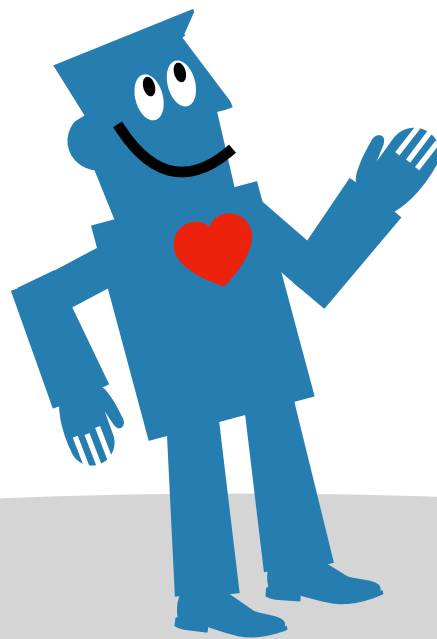


THE
**CREDIT
UNION**
WAY

Inspiring Stories of
Credit Unions Coming
to the Rescue for Their
Members and the
Community



LEE SILBER

The Credit Union Way

Inspiring Stories of Credit Unions Coming to the Rescue for Their Members, Employees, and the Community

Lee Silber

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Written, designed, and “edited” by Lee Silber

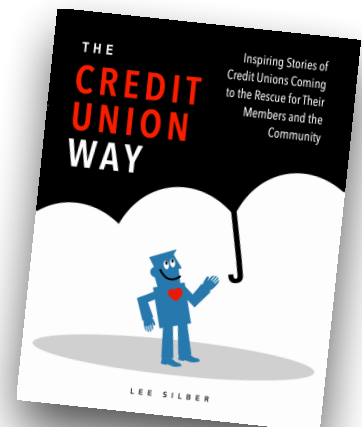
If you have a story that you want to tell about your credit union, please send it to: leesilber@leesilber.com

To read Lee’s other e-books for free go to:
www.leesilber.com/resources-mini

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Lee Silber is a lifelong credit union member who also speaks to credit unions and credit union associations nationwide on a number of relevant topics. This is his 26th book.





WELCOME

Why It's Time These Stories Are Told



Remember how popular the *Chicken Soup For The Soul* books were back in the day. People gobbled up these feel good stories. It seemed everyone was reading the short and inspiring stories and sharing them with family and friends—this was before social media was mainstream.

In today's busy world, maybe the best way to get the word out about how wonderful credit unions are is through quick, easy-to-read, real-life member stories exemplifying how credit unions step up and step in when we need them most.

So, if you are a credit union member these stories will reaffirm what you already know, you made the right choice in who you trust with your money. If you're *not* a member, the hope is you will consider switching over. Either way, enjoy these uplifting stories and tales of people helping people.



—LEE SILBER

Lifelong Credit Union Member

Pictured is Lee Silber with Kim Babington of SIU Credit Union.

CABRILLO CREDIT UNION

We Never “Tire” of Wowing Members

It was a Friday evening and a member called just before closing and said his debit card wasn’t working. I looked at his balance and he had plenty of money in the account so I asked him, “Where are you?”

He said he was at Big O Tires. He needed tires and they wouldn’t let him take his car unless he paid. He asked me what he should do?

It was fortunate he lived in my neighborhood so I said, “Hang tight. I’ll drive down there and pay for it and you can pay me back. We’ll straighten it all out on Monday.”

He goes, ‘You’re joking?’

I said, ‘No, it’s not a problem.’”

I heard him turn around and say, “My bankers on the way.” (He later told me the salesperson didn’t believe him.)

I drove down there and pulled out my corporate card and paid for the tires. The salesperson was flabbergasted and said, “You have a personal banker?” The member replied, “Yeah, because I bank with a credit union.”



Mike DeShazo

THE CREDIT UNION WAY

What we learned. *With a credit union you're not just an account number –you're a member, friend, and neighbor. Not every credit union employee can drop everything and rush to your aid, but we will go out of our way to help you in a crisis... and sometimes we just may come to the rescue like Mike did. Choosing a credit union means you have a partner who cares and in today's world of automation and artificial intelligence it's nice to know some institutions combine high-touch with high-tech.*



HAWAII FIRST FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

A Race Against Time at the Worst Time



At Hawaii Federal Credit Union it's not just about collecting late loan payments. It's about finding solutions to help each member.

Collections employee Nadine Maglasang recalls how she and her coworker helped a member through a dire, emotional situation. Nadine called the member about a late loan payment and was told the member's husband was on his death bed and the loan payment completely slipped her mind. She promised to come in that day to make the payment, which she did.

"She told me her husband had cancer and didn't have much time," Nadine recalls. "She also said their property was in his name only and she didn't know where the deed was since the mortgage was paid off years ago. She was afraid the property would fall into probate upon her husband's death. A neighbor told her she would have to get an attorney to help her save her property, but it would cost her about a \$1,000."

Nadine went over and above her collections duty to help this-



Nadine and Christy

Continued...

THE CREDIT UNION WAY

member in crisis. She called someone at the Bureau of Conveyance who found the member's deed. Nadine got a copy of it the same day. She also asked a realtor to recommend an attorney who was able to add the member's name to the deed for less than \$500.

With her coworker Christy Lopez, Nadine rushed the documents to the hospital early the next morning to get it notarized for the member. They advised the member's daughter to get the notarized documents to the attorney ASAP. The documents were recorded at the Bureau of Conveyances at 3:17 pm; the member's husband died at 6:46 pm.

“Our member is forever grateful for the help she got from her credit union!” Nadine says. “She tells family and friends about how her credit union (Pearl Hawaii FCU) went the extra mile to find a solution.”

What we learned. *Credit Unions care. We often hear financial institutions say, “It’s not personal, it’s business” when they can’t or won’t do the right thing. That’s not true with credit unions. It is personal, and personal is better. As more and more things are automated, it’s nice to know there are people who care and that your credit union is staffed with them.*



NAVY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Keeping Members Safe From Fraud



Unfortunately, we've seen an uptick in "elder abuse" fraud. As a result, our Fraud and Digital department has been expanding to keep pace—which is sad because it shows how fraud and scams are taking advantage of our members.

The good news is we recently had an MSR (Member Service Representative) stop one of these fraud situations when a tenured member called regarding her account. She noticed several strange transactions on her statement that she wasn't aware of—because they weren't hers.

She was very confused about what was going on and what our MSR was telling her on the phone about what we needed to do—shut down her account and try to get her money back. Luckily, the MSR heard the member's adult child in the background. She asked the member if it was okay to explain what was going on with the account to her daughter. The member agreed, and a plan was formulated.

Navy Federal was able to refund the money she'd lost to fraud and open a new account before thousands of dollars were stolen.



Joann Hauser

THE CREDIT UNION WAY

What we learned. *We shouldn't feel inferior to big banks because they have some things we don't. Instead, we should celebrate the fact credit unions are smaller, and what that means to our members. We are just as safe—if not more so—than big banks, but we are also able to work more closely with our members when something goes awry, and we can offer solutions and service big financial institutions can't.*



WESTCONSIN CREDIT UNION

Providing a Solution to 'Keep on Truckin'



A couple walked into our office one afternoon, looking for help with their truck that was in need of a repair. They hoped to discuss the possibility of adding to their signature loan to cover the cost.

As we worked through their application, one of our employees noticed something concerning—a payday loan from the previous Fall. In an act of desperation, the couple had borrowed \$1,200 to cover a prior repair. Despite having already made \$660 in payments, the balance on their loan had barely budged, dropping by only \$78 due to their staggering 203% interest rate.

Struggling to keep up with the next repair, they were at a loss about where to turn next, so they reached out to us hopeful for a better solution.

The couple had an excellent payment history with us that spoke volumes. In the end, we were able to approve their request and help them escape their payday loan nightmare. Instead of continuing to pay \$2,511 in interest over the full term of the payday loan, they refinanced, combining the debt into their existing loan.



The WESTconsin team.

Continued...

THE CREDIT UNION WAY

With this new setup, they would only pay \$275 in interest, and best of all, they would be out of debt in just 13 months.

As they walked out of our office, the relief was palpable. They were beyond grateful for the opportunity to start fresh. It was a moment that reminded us why we do what we do— supporting our members and communities in any way we can to help them achieve a brighter financial future.”

What we learned. *The reason to choose a credit union over other financial institutions are many—several are demonstrated in this story. Credit unions aren't focused on finding ways to get more of your money. In fact, it's the opposite. They are trying to help you save money. They care about you as a person so they seek solutions to make your financial life better. It's also true that people drawn to work for credit unions are naturally empathetic and understanding and don't judge when a member finds themselves in a financial pickle.*



MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE

Learning to Fish and Financial Literacy

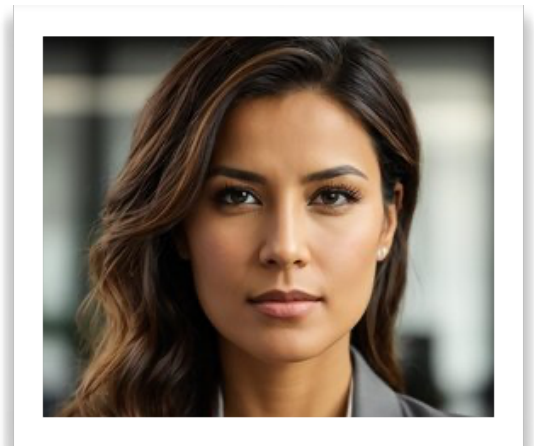


There wasn't a term for it back then, now they're called "helicopter parents". Both my grandparents and parents showed me they loved me by giving me financial gifts when I was little, and then as an adult. It helped me in so many ways, but hurt me in others.

I never really knew what it was like to make my own money. I also never had to worry about being broke because I could count on my parents to bail me out. Then I lost both parents and I was on my own.

My inheritance wasn't much, but I took it to my local credit union to ask for help. I was both scared and uninformed when it came to financial literacy. I was probably operating at a 5th grade level. I asked the branch manager how could I make this money last and the advice I received went well beyond what type of account to open.

It turns out my credit union offered classes and support and for the first time in my life (at the age of 34) I began to come to grips with my finances and planning for the future. Even though I was late to the game and grew up having most things in my life taken care of, I now feel empowered thanks to my credit union.



"Denise"

THE CREDIT UNION WAY

What we learned. *Letting our kids earn their own money, struggle (a little), and putting them in charge of (some of) their own finances at an early age—even if they make mistakes—is showing you love and trust them. Offering financial literacy for young people as part of what we do as credit unions creates smarter members and when you're smart about money you are going to choose a credit union every time.*



ANONYMOUS CREDIT UNION

Pocket Change Can Lead to Mad Money



The following story was told to me with the promise I not use the branch manager's name or share the name of the credit union. This is so him, and why this is such a great anecdote.

My friend had risen through the ranks of his credit union despite being painfully shy. Now that he was a Branch Manager, he preferred to remain at his desk, even though the partition was made of glass.

On one busy Friday afternoon all the tellers were busy and there was a long line of members waiting their turn. A man walked into the credit union with a bag of coins in his hand. He took one look at the line and began searching for someone at the branch who wasn't busy and he locked eyes with the branch manager. He shook his bag of coins as if to say, "Hello, I need service and I'm too important to wait in line."

The branch manager reluctantly came out and asked the impatient patron what he could do for him.

"Do you have coin wrappers?" the man asked.



Lee Silber

Continued...

THE CREDIT UNION WAY

“My bank across the street said that you did and that they’re free. I need them to roll my son’s piggy bank money.”

“Yes, we have coin wrappers and they’re free,” the branch manager replied. His first inclination was to hand the man a stack of coin wrappers and rush back to the safety of his office. Despite his fears, he offered to roll the coins to prove his credit union was far superior to the big bank across the street.

“Don’t I know you?” The man asked while his coins were being expertly rolled. “Yeah, our sons play Little League together.”

It turned out the two had a lot in common and a connection was made while they sat and chatted.

“Do you have money market accounts here?” The man wanted to know when the work was done.

“Of course, and with great rates I might add,” the branch manager proudly stated, and explained how credit union accounts were insured.

“Good. I want to open an account here today. The fact that you made the effort to come out and ask me what I needed, and then took the time to roll my coins for me means a lot. That’s why I’m switching all of my finances over, starting with this check for \$200,000 to open a money market account.”

What we learned. *You never know. If we treat everyone like royalty or a family member we may be surprised at the good things that can happen. Even if nothing happens, it feels good to make another person’s day. Commit to making every interaction with a member (or potential member) a chance to make them feel special, important, and appreciated and then exceed their expectations with the service you offer with a smile.*



SIU CREDIT UNION

Can One Person Make a Difference? Yes!



This is a tale of passion, connection, and the impact one person can have when they care. Meet Kim Babington, the extraordinary Community Outreach Specialist at SIU Credit Union. Her story is told by her co-worker and biggest fan, Raivee Subramanian.

“At 62 years young, Kim’s energy and passion for community engagement not only inspires *me*, but leaves an indelible mark on everyone fortunate enough to cross her path. Whether interacting with the President of a company or a waiter at a pizza joint, Kim has the unique ability to connect with people from all walks of life.

Our initial encounter was a testament to her welcoming nature marked by a warm smile and genuine interest in me... her successor. From the outset, it became evident this wasn't just a job for Kim—it was a calling she embraced with an open heart. Expecting just an hour of class presentation, I was pleasantly surprised to discover it was a nearly four-hour marathon on financial literacy for the Junior High School—and the kids loved every minute of it.



Kim Babington

Continued...

THE CREDIT UNION WAY

Kim's ability to maintain engagement with the school's staff, teachers, and students for four consecutive hours showcased her warmth, enthusiasm, and unique approach to financial education. By gamifying topics—making them both fun and interactive while also blending in substance—Kim ensured active participation and a deep understanding of financial concepts. The whole experience left me wishing I'd met her sooner in life.

Kim often said: 'People helping people is not just a motto; it's the credit union way of life.' SIU Credit Union has annually given hundreds of thousands of dollars to the community to fund buildings, feed families, and support nonprofits across Southern Illinois, and Kim was the heart and soul behind these initiatives. She believed her true calling was to help people in need.

I witnessed this first hand when it was my turn to teach and she sat at the back of the classroom for support. Halfway through I noticed Kim had slipped out. My mind raced—had something urgent come up? Had she disliked my delivery? I pushed through, determined to keep the students engaged.

As I wrapped up the session, Kim reappeared, carrying a small bag. Between classes, she explained what had happened. She had noticed a student's worn-out shoes, toes peeking out through the fabric. Her natural curiosity led her to discover that the student was a foster child in need. Without a second thought, Kim dashed out to buy a new pair of shoes, returning before the class ended.

I asked her if she would expense the shoes to the credit union. She smiled and shook her head. 'There's no GL code (numerical code for expenses) for this,' she said. 'Sometimes, helping people isn't about budgets or approvals. It's about doing the right thing.'

Continued...

THE CREDIT UNION WAY

This wasn't the first time Kim's generosity had gone above and beyond. There was another instance when she helped a couple of Southern Illinois University football players. They were far from home, with no family in Carbondale to celebrate a local festival. Kim didn't hesitate, she "adopted" them, ensuring they felt a sense of belonging. Not only that, she also went out and bought several hundred dollars' worth of groceries (using her own money) to make sure the players had a meal that felt like home.

When Kim retired she didn't just leave her position, she left an example myself and others in the credit union movement can follow. That's her legacy, and the countless people she impacted in a positive way over the years.

What we learned. *Kim's actions weren't just about charity—they embody the spirit of the credit union. It's easy to talk about "people helping people," but Kim lives it. Her work, her generosity, and her instinct to act without hesitation were reminders that for those in the credit union world, helping others isn't just a job. It's a way of life.*

The Credit Union Way

Inspiring Stories of Credit Unions Coming to the Rescue for Their Members, Employees, and the Community

Lee Silber is the award-winning author of 25 books and 10 e-books. A sought-after speaker in the credit union world, Silber is also a lifelong credit union member.

If you have a story that you want to tell about your credit union, please send it to: leesilber@leesilber.com

To read Lee's other books and e-books for free go to:

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