

QUARTERLY MEMBER

UPDATE

- 2 Dogwood Arts Calendar of Events
- 3 Smart Ways to Utilize your Income Tax Return
Fraud Warning
- 4 April is Financial Literacy Month
Update Your Address
Tax Discounts
Holiday Closings & Events

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CEO & BOARD CHAIR

2024 was a transformative year for ORNL Federal Credit Union. This included introducing new products and services, forging exciting new partnerships, and expanding our presence in both new and existing communities. Together, we are driving strength and ensuring that we all thrive.

We furthered our commitment to meeting our members where they are, with a renewed focus on delivering value. We proudly supported 217,657 members in reaching their financial goals and reaffirmed our dedication to our communities with over \$600,000 donated to local non-profit organizations, continuing to reflect our focus and impact. Here are our key achievements:

- **Returning Value to Members:** We are excited to share that we enhanced our approach by implementing a series of product improvements ensuring a more equitable distribution of benefits. Highlights included the introduction of a no-fee Spending Plus account with 4% APY, the reduction of NSF and overdraft fees, the elimination of incoming wire fees, and an increase in debit card rewards. These enhancements collectively returned over \$6.9 million to our members in 2024.
- **Great Place to Work:** In 2024, we transitioned from Great Place to Work (GPTW) to our new survey partner, Qualtrics. The data, based entirely on employee feedback, revealed that 85% of survey participants would recommend ORNL FCU as a great place to work. With a 90% survey completion rate, a 15% increase from last year—our favorability rate far exceeds the typical 65% of U.S. companies. We're proud of our vibrant, trust-based work environment and look forward to continuing to support our amazing employees!
- **Lowland Credit Union Merger:** We completed a successful merger with LCU in 2024. This strategic partnership has significantly expanded our branch network and enhanced our service levels, providing our members with greater access and convenience. The merger demonstrates our unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional value and service to our

members and communities. We look forward to the continued growth and success of our combined organization.

- **Branch Projects:** We are excited to announce several branch projects that are currently underway. New builds and remodels in Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge West, Fountain City, Morristown East, Morristown West, and Newport are set to enhance our service offerings significantly. These projects include modernizing facilities, expanding service areas, and incorporating advanced technology to better serve our members. Each project is designed to improve your banking experience, providing greater convenience and accessibility. We look forward to unveiling these upgraded branches and continuing to meet the evolving needs of our community.
- **Auto Loan Payoffs & Mortgage Payments:** We paid off auto loans for ten members and covered mortgage payments for two members for a year, totaling over \$850,000 since 2019.

Our achievements are a testament to the trust of our members, the commitment of our employees, and the support of our community partners. As we look ahead, this dedication will remain at the heart of everything we do.

Join us in celebrating our remarkable achievements in 2024. Let's move forward with unwavering determination and boundless energy, aiming for even greater success in the future!



Jenny Vipperman
JENNY VIPPERMAN
President & CEO



W.R. Gorman
RANDY GORMAN
Chair, Board of Directors



SPRING IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER AND THAT MEANS...

DOGWOOD ARTS IS READY TO BLOOM!

As presenting sponsor for over 20 years, ORNL FCU supports all of Dogwood Arts' annual festivals, programs, performances, and exhibitions—98% of their programs are completely free.

Dogwood Arts is a year-round celebration of the art, culture, and natural beauty of East Tennessee, featuring 20+ events for the entire community to enjoy. From live music and gallery exhibitions to scenic drives along the Dogwood Trails, featured gardens, and engaging youth programs, there's something for everyone.

Join us in celebrating the vibrant spirit of our region with Dogwood Arts this season!

SPRING 2025 EVENTS

VISIT [DOGWOODARTS.COM/EVENTS](https://dogwoodarts.com/events) FOR EVENT DETAILS

DOGWOOD TRAILS, OPEN GARDENS, CAMERA SITES April 1–30, 2025 | East Knoxville Trails are Featured in 2025

Knoxville's iconic dogwood trails date back to 1955 and today cover more than 90 miles in 13 neighborhoods throughout the city. Follow the pink lines and take a drive, a walk, or a bike ride and enjoy the scenic natural beauty of our region. The trails in East Knoxville (Holston Hills and Morningside) will be Dogwood's 2025 Featured Trails.

CHALK WALK April 5, 2025 | Downtown Knoxville/Market Square

300+ artists of all ages create one-of-a-kind chalk designs in a live art competition on Market Square. The competition is open to individual artists and teams. Prizes are awarded to select artists who create imaginative and inspiring artworks in their age division.

DOGWOOD TRAIL WALK & TALK April 10, 2025 | Knoxville Botanical Gardens

Enjoy an evening springtime stroll along the Dogwood Walking Trail at the Knoxville Botanical Gardens. Learn more about the property's dogwood collection and history and stay for a one-of-a-kind discussion about dogwoods with Brian Campbell, the Garden's former Director of Horticulture. Register online at knoxgarden.org/events. This event is free to KBGA members and neighbors in the 37914/5 zip codes, and \$5 for the public.

SPRING FEATURED GARDENS April 12–13, 2025 | Various Locations

Select private properties with distinguished and unique gardens open their grounds to the public for one weekend only. This self-guided tour is free, though a \$5 donation per garden is suggested. No pets are allowed in the private gardens.

- **North Knoxville:** Baxter Gardens
3901 Sam Cooper Lane, Knoxville, TN 37918
- **East Knoxville:** GATOP (God's Answer to Our Prayers)
2634 Delrose Drive, Knoxville, TN 37914
- **North Knoxville:** Savage Garden
3237 Garden Drive, Knoxville, TN 37918

DOGWOOD ARTS FESTIVAL April 25–27, 2025 | World's Fair Park

A beloved Knoxville tradition since 1961, the Dogwood Arts Festival celebrates art, music, and the beauty of East Tennessee each spring. Held at World's Fair Park, this vibrant event features over 100 fine art vendors, live entertainment, kids' activities, and delicious local food.

EPIPHONE GUITAR DESIGN EXHIBITION May 2–30, 2025 | Dogwood Arts Gallery & the Southern Skies Music Festival

20 guitars designed and painted by youth artists from across East Tennessee will be on display in the Dogwood Gallery during the month of May and at Southern Skies Music Festival on May 10. The guitars will be auctioned online to benefit youth art programs at Dogwood Arts.

SOUTHERN SKIES WHISKEY & MUSIC FESTIVAL May 10, 2025 | World's Fair Park

Southern Skies returns to World's Fair Park with a stellar lineup, including Charley Crockett, The Dirty Guv'nahs, Devon Gilfillian, and more.

Curated by Dogwood Arts and The Dirty Guv'nahs, this Knoxville festival blends live music, craft whiskey, local food, and a vibrant atmosphere. Don't miss out—get your tickets now at southernskiesmusicfestival.com!

ART IN PUBLIC PLACES: OUTDOOR SCULPTURE EXHIBITION June 2025–June 2026

Art in Public Places brings art outside, adding character and beauty to our city streets and spaces. The annually-rotating, outdoor exhibition includes large-scale sculptures installed in prominent locations throughout Knoxville, Oak Ridge, Maryville, and Alcoa, including two ORNL FCU branches.

SMART WAYS TO UTILIZE YOUR INCOME TAX RETURN

At ORNL Federal Credit Union, we want your tax return to make a lasting impact on your financial wellness. Instead of letting that extra cash burn a hole in your pocket, consider these smart ways to put it to work for you.

BUILD OR STRENGTHEN YOUR EMERGENCY FUND

Life is unpredictable, and an emergency fund can provide peace of mind when unexpected expenses arise. Financial experts recommend saving three to six months' worth of living expenses. If your emergency fund is lacking or nonexistent, your tax return is a great way to jump-start it.

PAY DOWN DEBT

High-interest debt, like credit card balances or payday loans, can weigh heavily on your finances. Using your tax return to reduce or eliminate debt can save you money on interest and free up cash flow for other financial goals while also helping maintain your credit score!

INVEST IN YOUR FUTURE

Consider contributing to a retirement account like an IRA or 401(k). Even a small investment now can grow significantly over time thanks to compound interest. If you already have retirement savings, you might explore other opportunities, such as opening a share certificate.

BOOST YOUR EDUCATION OR CAREER

Your tax return could be the key to advancing your skills or career. Use the funds to take a certification course, enroll in a class, or attend a professional workshop. These investments can increase your earning potential and job satisfaction.

GIVE BACK

If your finances are in good shape, consider using part of your return to support causes that matter to you. Donating to a charity or community organization not only helps others, but can also be a fulfilling way to give back.



MAKE HOME IMPROVEMENTS

If you own a home, consider using your tax return for repairs or upgrades. Focus on projects that improve energy efficiency, such as adding insulation or upgrading appliances. These improvements can lower utility bills and increase your home's value.

FUND A LONG-TERM GOAL

Whether you're saving for a down payment on a house, planning a dream vacation, or building a college fund for your children, your tax return can help you get closer to achieving those goals. Setting aside the money in a high-yield savings account can also help it grow while you plan.

TREAT YOURSELF RESPONSIBLY

It's okay to use a portion of your tax return to enjoy life. Treat yourself to something meaningful, like a small getaway or a special purchase. The key is to plan and budget so it doesn't derail your other financial priorities.

FRAUD WARNING!

PROTECT YOUR WALLET: KNOW THE
SIGNS OF A FRAUD ATTEMPT

If someone approaches you online or by phone to do any of these things with your cash, your first thought should be **FRAUD!**

- Make a payment using GIFT CARDS.
- Earn fast money with CRYPTO CURRENCY like BITCOIN.
- WIRE or SHIP funds quickly to help a friend or loved one.

The fraudsters are working overtime to get YOUR money. Don't let them! Learn more about these and other popular scams by visiting our website at ornlfcu.com/learn/security-education.



APRIL IS FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH

LET'S BUILD STRONGER FINANCIAL FUTURES!

Did you know April is National Financial Literacy Month? It's the perfect time to sharpen your money skills, set financial goals, and take control of your financial future. At ORNL Federal Credit Union, we're committed to empowering our members with the knowledge and tools they need to make confident financial decisions.

Throughout the year, we provide financial education through workshops, resources, and one-on-one support. This month, we encourage you to take advantage of our financial wellness programs—whether you want to improve your budgeting skills, boost your savings, or learn about responsible borrowing.

Stay tuned for upcoming events and resources to help you on your financial journey! Let's make April a month of smart money moves!

MOVED RECENTLY?

Don't miss important statements and notices! It's easy to update your address in Online and Mobile Banking. Navigate to:

[More](#) > [Tools](#) > [Settings](#) > [Contact](#)

You can also call us at 800.676.5328 or stop by your local branch.



SAVE MONEY AND WIN TAX SEASON!

ORNL FCU members **can save 20% on TurboTax®**, whether you file yourself or have an expert file for you. Or save **up to \$25 at H&R Block** on in-office tax prep services and get your taxes done by professionals. Plus, enter for a chance to win \$10,000 in the Love My Credit Union® Rewards Tax Time Sweepstakes. Start today and save!

Scan the QR code to get discounts and enter to win or visit taxservices.lovemycreditunion.org.

Offer details and disclaimers available at taxservices.lovemycreditunion.org.



CONTACT

LOCAL CALLS
865.688.9555

All locations except Athens, Decatur, Madisonville, Morristown, Newport, and LaFollette.

TOLL-FREE
800.676.5328

UPDATE is published quarterly by ORNL FCU as an information service to its members. Suggestions, questions, and comments should be sent to:

ORNL FCU UPDATE
P.O. Box 365
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

DIRECTORS

Randy Gorman, Board Chair
James Payne, Vice Chair
Mary Beth Blair, Treasurer
Joel Pearman, Secretary
Jama Hill
Leigha Justice
David Mandl
Sam McKenzie
Harriet Walker
Mary Kiser, Associate Director
Johnny Moore, Associate Director

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Gerald Smith, Chair
David Mandl, Vice Chair
Mary Kiser, Secretary

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS & EVENTS

Saturday, April 5
Chalk Walk
Market Square | Details on Page 2

Friday–Sunday, April 25–27
Dogwood Arts Festival
World's Fair Park | Details on Page 2

Saturday, May 10
Southern Skies Music Festival
World's Fair Park | Details on Page 2

Monday, May 26 | CLOSED
Memorial Day

Thursday, June 19 | CLOSED
Juneteenth

ornlfcu.com

Federally Insured by NCUA.
Equal Housing Lender.