



January 2010

First-Time Homebuyer Credit Extended

If you are in the market for a new home, you may still be able to claim the First-Time Homebuyer Credit Congress passed last year. They recently extended the credit, and expanded the parameters of who qualifies!

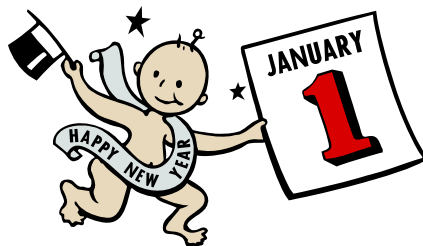
A few things the IRS wants you to know about the expanded credit, and whether you qualify, are:

- You must buy (or enter into a binding contract to buy) a principal residence on or before April 30, 2010, and close on the home on or before June 30, 2010.
- For qualifying purchases in 2010, you will have the option of claiming the credit on either your 2009 *or* 2010 return.
- A long-time resident of the same home can now qualify for a reduced credit. If you lived in the same principal residence for a five-consecutive year period during the eight-year period that ended on the date your new home is purchased (and settled after November 6, 2009) you may qualify for a reduced credit.
- The maximum credit for long-time residents is \$6,500. However, married individuals filing separately are limited to \$3,250.
- People with higher incomes can now qualify for the credit. The new law raises the income limits for homes purchased after November 6, 2009. The full credit is available to taxpayers with modified adjusted gross incomes up to \$125,000, or \$225,000 for joint filers.
- The IRS will issue a December 2009 revision of Form 5405 to claim this credit. The December revised form must be used for homes purchased after November 6, 2009 – whether the credit is for 2008 or for 2009. The December 2009 form must be used for homes purchased after November 6, 2009 – whether the credit is for 2008 or for 2009 – and for all home purchases that are claimed on 2009 returns.
- No credit is available if the purchase price of the home exceeds \$800,000.
- The purchaser must be at least 18 years old on the date of purchase. For a married couple, only one spouse must meet this age requirement.
- A dependent is not eligible to claim the credit.

Friends in Motion

Some of the wedding anniversaries celebrated in December and this month include: **Bob and Pat Rutledge** (67 years) of Adair, **Ghlee and Charlotte Harris** (65 years) of Lewistown, **Floyd and Lorraine Ridle** (64 years) of rural Marietta, **Max and JoAnne Powell** (59 years) of Bushnell, **Harold and Beverly Camp** (59 years) of Bushnell, **Tom and Peggy Norris** (59 years) of Bushnell, **Jim and Elizabeth McGrew** (58 years) of rural Avon, **Don and Jada King** (58 years) of Bushnell, **Frank and Kathryn Havens** (57 years) of Prairie City, **Jim and Susie Bucher** (54 years) of rural Macomb, **Keith and Doris Ferris** (54 years) of Bushnell, **Jerry and Sharon Walter** (47 years) of Prairie City, and **Larry and Anna Kugler** (47 years) of Bushnell. Congratulations to each and every one of you!

Some birthdays celebrated in December and this month include: **Marian Feaster** (95) of Prairie City, **Mildred Kreps** (94) of Bushnell, **Joe Meloan** (93) of Highland, Illinois, **Harriet Bricker** (92) of Macomb, **Virginia Matthews** (91) of Avon, **Anna James** (87) of Bushnell, and **Thelma Fox** (86) of Bushnell. Happy birthday to each of you!



www.bushnellbank.com

Specialty Coins Clearance Sale!

Shop now for birthday, anniversary and graduation gifts at Farmers & Merchants State Bank. Many items are one-of-a-kind solid silver commemorative coins and ornaments. You will also find proof sets for various years, as well as many of the Presidential and First-Lady quarters.

All prices have been reduced, and inventory is being liquidated!

Please visit the main bank lobby at F&M today for a gift that is unique. The coin display case is located beside the coin counting machine, just past the teller line. Ask any of the tellers for assistance with your purchase.

Avoid The Headache!

Last year the IRS reported over 95,700 refund checks (totaling \$92 million) were returned by the post office as undeliverable, due to unreported changes of name and/or address. There are two things you can do to avoid this potential headache.

First, if you changed your name and/or address in the past year, be sure to notify the IRS, and report the correct information on your tax return.

The second thing you can do is have your refund directly deposited to your checking or savings account. You will not only receive the funds about two weeks sooner, it's more convenient, there's no lost or stolen check, and it saves tax dollars spent on postage. Try it! You might like it!

Let us Introduce. . . Brittany Pieper!



One of the newest members of the F&M family is **Brittany Pieper**, who started working part-time as a teller in August last year.

Brittany was born to **Tom** and **Rose** (a former F&M employee herself!) **Pieper**, of Bushnell, graduated from B-PC High School in May 2009, and is currently attending Western Illinois University as an Agriculture Education major.

When **Brittany** is not working at the bank, or attending classes, she loves reading, being outdoors with her friends, and being a part of the FFA Alumni. She also enjoys helping with the annual Bushnell Horse Show held every summer.

Some of **Brittany's** favorite recipes include:

CRISPIX MIX

2 c. brown sugar 2 sticks margarine
½ c. Karo syrup Dry roasted peanuts
1 box Crispix cereal

In saucepan, mix together the brown sugar, margarine and Karo syrup. Bring to a boil for two minutes.

Add hot mixture to Crispix and peanuts. Put in brown paper bag and shake

Put mixture in microwave for two minutes on high. Remove, allow to dry, and store in plastic container.

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

1 c. margarine ¾ c. brown sugar
¾ c. sugar 3 c. flour (or more)
2 eggs ½ tsp. baking powder
¼ tsp. salt 1 Tbsp. baking soda
12 oz. chocolate chips 2 Tbsp. hot water

Cut margarine into dry ingredients. Add eggs one at a time, mixing after each. Add hot water and stir.

Gently fold in the chocolate chips. Drop by teaspoons full onto well-greased and floured cookie sheet. Bake



at 350° for 8 to 10 minutes, until done. Serve warm, right from the oven, as they rarely last long enough to make it to the cookie canister!



Monday, January 18th
(Bank Holiday)

Did You Know?

It's against the law to have anything blocking your view in the windshield of your vehicle. That means the new GPS navigation system you got for Christmas cannot be attached to the windshield, and your handicap placard cannot be hung from the mirror. If you choose to do either, you could be issued a ticket!

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Fri. Jan. 8 & Feb. 5 - Free cholesterol screening and blood pressure check, F&M Main Bank Lobby, 9 am to 10 am

Jan. 8 & Feb. 12- Red Cross Apheresis blood drive, Bushnell Recreation Center. Call 772-9238 for an appointment.

Sat. Jan. 31 - Bushnell VFW Soup Supper, 5 pm to 7:30 pm

Sat. Feb. 6 & Mar. 5 - VFW breakfast, 6:30 am to 10:30 am

Sat. Feb. 28 - Annual Chili Cook-Off, Bushnell VFW, 5 pm to 10 pm, benefits Bushnell Swimming Pool

F&M Bank Loan Specials

Home Loans:
Free Appraisal!

Farm Real Estate:
Contact Loan Dept.

Call 309-772-2171

for details!

Some Restrictions Apply.
Subject to Credit Approval.



New Illinois Cell Phone Law!

Effective January 1, 2010, in the state of Illinois, it will be **illegal** to:

- Send a text message, or read a text message, while your car is in traffic, unless you are fully stopped due to a blocked roadway (i.e. train crossing). A stop sign or stop light does **not** waive this restriction. The vehicle must be in park or neutral, or you must pull over to the side of the road and stop.
- Send an e-mail message, or read an e-mail message, while your car is in traffic, unless you are fully stopped due to a



blocked roadway (i.e. train crossing). Again, a stop sign or stop light does **not** waive this restriction. The vehicle must be in park or neutral, or you must pull over to the side of the road and stop.

- Use a cell phone in a **School Zone** or **Construction Zone** *unless* you use a hands-free device, such as a Bluetooth, headset or ear bud, which allows you to keep both hands on the wheel.



**ILLINOIS
DRIVERS:
NO
HAND-HELD
CELLPHONE
USE!**