

Getting to Know Her... Liz Talian-Clarke continued...

(Continued from page 2)

consider buying a card and writing a note letting the recipient know about the donation and who or what it will benefit.

Depending on the recipient, a donation in his or her name can bring great meaning this holiday season. Buying a family in Africa a goat will not only be great conversation around the table but will also keep giving well beyond the holiday season.

Getting to Know Her... Liz Talian-Clarke

Title: Wawa Branch Manager

Community Involvement: I have been a member of the Rotary Club of Wawa since October 2000. I am also a member of the Canadian Cancer Society here in Wawa. I sit on the Board for the North Algoma Regional Employment Help Centre. I am also a member of the local BIA (Business Improvement Association) and am a leader for Weight Watchers.

Favourite Holiday Gift Received: My sister-in-law donated money in our name for fresh water in South America. We appreciated the fact that she reached out and touched another life halfway around the world.

Favourite Donation Made in Lieu of a Gift: My favourite donation has been to our World Community Service project in Zambia, Africa. We were able to raise enough funds to have four water wells drilled to four schools in the Lyuansha area to bring fresh water to the students in those schools. The girls are now able to stay in school and complete their studies as they no longer have to walk 10 kilometres to fetch water for their families. This was part of an ongoing project. Today, those bore holes in the schools service over 10,000 people who now have fresh water.



Stiletto Trivia:

Answer the following questions and post your answers on www.northerncents.ca for a chance to win a prize. Northern Credit Union is located in 23 different communities. Which of these communities is home to the following:

- A nine-metre replica of a 1951 Canadian nickel
- A nine-metre steel Canada goose
- The world's largest game preserve/wildlife sanctuary

Join Purse String Today



Join our community at www.northernpursestrings.com for more information and inspiration and make the most out of your purse strings.

About Northern Credit Union

Serving 23 communities stretching along the Canadian Shield in northern and northeastern Ontario, Northern Credit Union is a full-service, locally-operated financial institution offering personal and commercial banking and financial planning expertise to over 47,000 member shareholders. For more information on Northern visit www.northernncu.com.



The Stiletto



A quarterly newsletter written for women by women

Issue 7 December 2011

Starting the New Year Off on the Right Financial Foot

By: Cyndy Dunbar

After the holiday gifts are opened and the treats enjoyed, we start to think about the year ahead and ways to make it the best year yet. Many set lofty New Year's Resolutions. Others set practical goals. When it comes to personal finances, however, there is no better time than the New Year to sit down and reassess our financial affairs.

The following are a few achievable New Year's Resolutions to start 2012 on the right financial foot:

1. **Learn one new thing about investing:** The more you know, the better the ability to make decisions that impact your financial future. Register for a financial boot camp, attend an RRSP seminar, read a book such as *Northern Cents* or pick up a pamphlet about investments.
2. **Create your own financial statement spreadsheet/Northern Money Map:** It can be difficult to get a complete picture of your finances until it's all right in front of you. Use the Northern

Money Map to outline all of the income coming in and all of the expenses going out along with current debts. This may help to determine where money can be saved to reduce expenses and overall debt. Track your progress monthly to see how far you have come.

3. **Make saving a family affair:** Get the entire family involved in finding ways to save money. Ask every member, including the kids, to come up with one way each to save money this year. This may include cooking more meals at home, making coffee at home rather than buying it, packing a lunch or keeping an eye out for coupons or discounts.
4. **Create a rainy day fund:** If you haven't already, consider putting away a little bit of money every week or month. This will come in handy one day when you need it most or might help you when it comes time to topping up RRSPs, or paying taxes.

These few resolutions are easy to do, and (Continued on page 3)

Inside this issue:

- Starting the New Year Off on the Right Financial Foot 1
- Making Donations as Gifts this Holiday Season 1
- Stepping Into the Kitchen—Recipe Mocha Cookie Pretzels 3
- Join Purse Strings 4
- About Northern Credit Union 4



building financial futures, together.

Making Donations as Gifts this Holiday Season

By: Liz Talian-Clarke

Every year, thousands of people spend the last few months of the year, often right up until Christmas Eve, hunting for the perfect gift for their friends and family. You got them a tie last year and a sweater the year before and a CD

before that. So what to buy the person who seems to have it all? A growing number of people are choosing to make a donation to a charity in lieu of a gift. Not only does it make life a bit easier for the giver and possibly yield tax benefits, it can be more meaningful for the recipient.

(Continued on page 2)

Making Donations as Gifts this Holiday Season continued...

Continued from page 1)

Many charities will provide a tax receipt for any donations made over \$25.00 whether the donation is made in your name or the recipient. Who said you can't give a gift and receive something in return?

The following are some tips to keep in mind when considering a donation in lieu of a gift this holiday season:

Do your research: Find out how much of the donation goes to administrative costs and how much ends up supporting the cause. The recipient of the gift may prefer supporting a charity that allots a larger percentage of money to those who need it the most.

Determine the kind of charity that would be most appropriate for the person receiving the gift: If the recipient loves sports, consider donating to a charity such as Right to Play. For someone with a passion for education, they might appreciate it if you purchased school supplies in their name for a child in Africa. Purchasing something of interest to them will make the gift that much more personal.

Consider this:

- A goat for a family in the third world provides nourishment and health. A herd of goats for the community can provide the possibility of a livelihood.



Courtesy World Vision

- Anti-malaria bed nets can help protect against the number one killer of children under five in Africa. Malaria takes the life of a child every 45 seconds.



Courtesy Plan Canada

- Adoption of an endangered animal can help to protect animals threatened by habitat loss, illegal hunting, etc.
- A personal care package can provide a woman and her child entering a local shelter with basic necessities like toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, diapers, etc.
- A hot breakfast or lunch program can provide low-income children with a nutritious meal to get them through the day and excel in their classes.



Choose a gift card to print out if the organization offers this option: Many charities will offer an option to print a card or send an email informing the recipient that a donation has been made in his or her name. To avoid going empty-handed and to give the recipient something tangible,

(Continued on page 4)

Stepping into the Kitchen... Mocha Cookie Pretzels

Looking for a little something special to bake up for the holidays? These elegant mocha-frosted cookies are wonderful with coffee and make an eye-catching addition to any cookie platter.

Cookie Ingredients

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 squares (1 ounce each) unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups cake flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

Glaze Ingredients

- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 teaspoon shortening
- 1 teaspoon light corn syrup
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 3 to 5 tablespoons strong brewed coffee
- 2 squares (1 ounce each) white baking chocolate, chopped
- Green colored sugar, optional

How to make it

1. In a small mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in egg. Beat in melted chocolate and vanilla. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.



2. Divide dough into fourths; divide each portion into 12 pieces. Shape each piece into a 6-in. rope; twist into a pretzel shape. Place 1 in. apart on lightly greased baking sheets. Bake at 400° for 7-9 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks to cool.
3. For glaze, in a microwave, melt the chocolate chips, shortening and corn syrup; stir until smooth. Stir in confectioners' sugar and enough coffee to achieve desired consistency. Dip cookies in glaze; allow excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper until set.
4. In a microwave, melt white chocolate; stir until smooth. Drizzle over cookies. Decorate with green sugar if desired; let stand until set. Yield: 4 dozen

Starting the New Year Off on the Right Financial Foot continued...

(Continued from page 1)

can be done as a family. Not only will you be thankful for it later on in the year, but the good habits may carry over from year to year helping you to achieve long-term financial success. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

Getting to Know Her... Cyndy Dunbar

Title: Investment Advisor

Area of Expertise: Analyzing companies and portfolios for safety and educating clients.



What She Loves about the Holidays: Getting together with family and friends

Holiday Spending Advice: Leave your credit cards hidden at home to help control impulse spending.

Please contact your local branch or visit www.northerncents.ca for information on our complimentary financial boot camps.