



Our newsletter that connects you with relevant information

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FROM HERITAGE FINANCIAL CREDIT UNION | WINTER 2026

THE HERITAGE CONNECTION



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President's Message



This past year, we commemorated our 85th anniversary. We celebrated not only a number but also generations of members, employees, and community partners who have shaped who we are today. Through employee appreciation events, member-focused celebrations, and commemorative initiatives, this anniversary allowed us to reflect on our legacy and reaffirm that the mission continuing to drive us is rooted in service, community, and connection.

Our strong commitment to local communities was highlighted through several initiatives throughout the last year. Team members volunteered their time with Habitat for Humanity and the Regional Food Bank of the Hudson Valley, and we reinforced our dedication to local impact through our Home Runs for Charity sponsorship with the Hudson Valley Renegades. In addition to these initiatives, we proudly participated in upwards of 200 events throughout the year, ranging from in-branch donation drives to hands-on support and sponsorship opportunities with local organizations. These efforts reflect our belief that supporting our local communities is at the heart of delivering meaningful financial service to our members. To learn more about our community impact, please see our Community Corner on *page 3*.

As we move forward with purpose in 2026, we have applied to become a Federally-Chartered credit union, which will provide new opportunities to serve our communities and expand our field of membership. For more details, please visit [heritagefcu.com/charter](https://www.heritagefcu.com/charter).

We have expanded our support for the business community this past year with growth in our Business Banking offerings, including commercial lending and a full suite of business deposit products and services. Our dedicated Business team is here to help entrepreneurs and organizations achieve their goals. We are proud to be a partner in local economic growth and look forward to deepening our support in the coming year.

Looking ahead, we will be introducing a variety of member benefits and deposit products that are designed to enhance your banking experience. These offerings will include exclusive discounts, rewards, and savings opportunities that will bring meaningful value to your membership with HFCU. You will soon be able to take advantage of new products, such as a high-yield savings and a cash-back checking, each developed with attractive features and rewarding benefits. More updates and exciting details will be announced in the months ahead.

We will also be enhancing how we share information with you. Beginning in 2026, our Member Newsletter will transition to two digital editions annually. This change allows us to communicate more efficiently and offer relevant tools, insights, and resources in each issue. Additional details on our newsletter update can be found on *page 6*.

Apart from the initiatives in the year ahead, you'll notice an enhanced level of service designed to make your experience easier and more efficient. We've transitioned to a new "Financial Partner" model, which means every team member is trained to assist you with all your banking needs, no more being directed from one desk to another.

Whether you're making a simple transaction, opening a deposit account, applying for a loan, or discussing more complex financial goals, any member of our branch team can help you from start to finish. You'll still see the same friendly faces you know and trust, now with expanded expertise to serve you even better. We are excited to bring you this more seamless, personal, and convenient branch experience, built around you!

As we welcome the new year, I am excited about the future of our Credit Union. We will continue building on a foundation that generations of members and dedicated employees have strengthened for 85 years, and we are poised to continue growing with purpose, innovation, and unwavering commitment to our members, employees, and community.

Thank you for being part of our Heritage and for allowing us the opportunity to serve you in supporting your financial goals. I look forward to achieving new milestones together in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. Thomas Cornelius". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "F" and "C".

F. Thomas Cornelius
President/CEO

Community Corner

Throughout the year, our team looked for meaningful ways to give back and extend a helping hand within our communities. Our teams volunteered their time with the Regional Food Bank of the Hudson Valley, helping sort and prepare food for those in need. In addition to our hands-on efforts, we were honored to contribute a \$6,000 donation to the Food Bank through our Home Runs for Charity initiative, made possible in partnership with the Hudson Valley Renegades.



We continued our commitment to the fight against breast cancer as well. This year, HFCU donated \$3,300 to Making Strides Against Breast Cancer and participated in the annual walk at Woodbury Common Premium Outlets, where we proudly sponsored the participant water table.



Our efforts extended to Habitat for Humanity, where team members volunteered both at build sites and at the ReStore location in Newburgh. Whether it's helping construct safe, affordable housing or sorting items that support Habitat's mission, we're grateful for the opportunity to contribute to Habitat's important work. And through our very own Halloween Costume Challenge, we were thrilled to make three \$250 donations to Pets Alive in Middletown, Community Matters 2 in Poughkeepsie, and DAFT Services in Newburgh.



In honor of Veterans Day, we partnered once again with the Hudson Valley Renegades for our annual Veterans Drive, an initiative that we are proud to take part in each year. Together, we delivered an estimated \$1,000 in food donations to the Castle Point VA Hospital in Wappingers Falls, supporting local veterans as well as the families who rely on the hospital's services.



As the holiday season continued, we were grateful for another opportunity to serve local families. Our team volunteered at the Regional Food Bank's Thanksgiving distribution event at Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, helping ensure that families across the Hudson Valley had access to a warm holiday meal. Continuing with the spirit of giving, our branches also came together throughout the month of December to host a variety of coat and toy drives, rallying support for local organizations and helping bring a little extra comfort and joy to families in our communities.



We are proud of what we've accomplished together and look forward to continuing these efforts in the year ahead!

Annual Board Elections

The nominating committee reports to the Secretary of the Board of Directors that two individuals, **Thomas Houston** and **Jennifer Ryan**, are up for re-election to the Board of Directors. The two director positions are for a three-year term. In addition to the candidates nominated for re-election, a member age 18 or older who has maintained their membership for a minimum of one (1) year, may petition for a position on the 2026 election ballot. If you would like to be nominated for the Board of Directors, please submit to Heritage Financial Credit Union, *Attn: Nominating Committee, 25 Rykowski Lane, Middletown, NY 10941*, a petition (including a statement of qualification and biographical data) signed by at least 10% of membership 18 and older who have maintained their membership for at least 90 days prior to signing the petition. The petition must be received on or before **March 27, 2026**.

If petitions are received, elections will be determined by a plurality vote by virtual ballot and will take place DURING Heritage Financial Credit Union's **86th Annual Meeting held virtually on May 28, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.** If no petitions are received, the Secretary will cast one vote for Thomas Houston and Jennifer Ryan for three-year terms.

This is a wonderful volunteer opportunity for people who enjoy being part of their community, and if elected, they will work in partnership with Heritage Financial Credit Union's management team to help the organization continue its mission to its membership: *To promote financial well-being so people may reach their fullest potential in life.*

A Smart Start for a **Stronger Business**

As any small business owner knows, keeping your business running smoothly requires periodic monitoring, adjusting, tweaking, and planning. Make a point this winter to complete the following tasks so you can prep your business for a profitable year.

Set goals. It's hard to motivate yourself to be successful if you don't have a clear idea of what you're striving for. Make sure you have clear and realistic goals in place, and share your goals with staff members so everyone is on the same page.

Evaluate your pricing. Consider whether your business would benefit from pricing changes. Recent growth might justify a slight increase in prices, while intense competition may require a slight decrease. Also pay attention to pricing changes from any vendors you work with, which may necessitate pricing modifications on your end.

Delegate certain tasks. Entrusting someone else to take over various responsibilities you've always handled yourself can be a challenge. But don't let the trivial details of day-to-day tasks prevent you from putting your energies toward bigger initiatives that could help your business grow. It may mean hiring extra help, but if that allows you to do more profitable things with your time, then the cost will be well worth it.

Assess your website. Go through each page of your website to verify that all links, images, etc., are correct. Ask yourself: Is the navigation intuitive for first-time visitors? Does the website give an accurate depiction of what my business offers? Does it look professional on different devices? If the answer to any of these questions is "no," you may want to consider an entire website redesign.

Advertise. Chances are you already market your business to some degree, but take your efforts up a notch by exploring new media channels or opportunities. Engage in social media marketing if you haven't already. Consider starting a business blog or creating videos that highlight your offerings. Also, evaluate your current marketing tactics to determine what's yielding the best results for your business.

Know when to let go. After investing a lot of time, effort, and resources into a certain product or business relationship, you may feel compelled to see things through – even if your business isn't seeing any benefits as a result. Remind yourself that sometimes it's best to admit when things aren't working and to put an end to that product, relationship, etc. Moving on will free up your time and energy to focus on the things that are benefiting your bottom line.

Become an HFCU Volunteer

As a member-owned financial cooperative, Heritage Financial Credit Union relies on the talents of volunteers from our membership to serve on our Board of Directors and Supervisory Committee.

Heritage Financial volunteers come together to represent the best interests of fellow Heritage Financial members in the following capacities:

Supervisory Committee: Appointed by Heritage Financial Credit Union Board of Directors. This Committee typically meets six to eight times per year to oversee and verify credit union records, monitor financial controls and work with HFCU’s internal auditing staff and external audit firms.

Associate Board Member: Appointed by Heritage Financial Credit Union Board of Directors. The Board of Directors meets at least 12 times per year. A member may be selected to a non-voting position to learn the duties, responsibilities and functions of the Board in its role of overseeing HFCU. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age and a current member in good standing* of Heritage Financial Credit Union for one year or more.

To apply, complete one of the three options below:

1. Mail a letter of interest and resume to:
Attn: Governance Committee
Heritage Financial Credit Union, 25 Rykowski Lane,
Middletown, NY 10941
2. Email a letter of interest and resume to:
search@contacthf.com
3. Complete the online application by visiting:
heritagefcu.com/hfcu-call-for-volunteers



Please scan the QR code with the camera on your smartphone to be taken directly to the application.

*A member in good standing is a member who maintains at least the minimum share set forth in Article III, Section 1 of these bylaws; who is not delinquent on any credit union loan; who has not had any account with this credit union closed due to abuse or negligent behavior; who has not been belligerent or abusive to any duly elected or appointed official or employee when that official or employee is carrying out their duties as set in the Act, the rules and regulations, the charter, and bylaws of this credit union; and who has not caused a financial loss to this credit union.



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*APR is Annual Percentage Rate. Rates as low as 7.99% APR. Max loan amount of \$3,000 with 12-month term. As an example: A 12-month loan with a fixed rate of 7.99% APR would result in a payment of \$86.97 per month for each \$1,000 financed. Actual rate may vary based on creditworthiness. All rates quoted include a 0.50% reduction for members who authorize payment of their HFCU loan through an automatic electronic funds transfer, debited from any account for the life of the loan. All extensions of credit are subject to credit approval. Rate shown is the lowest offered for the loan products advertised. Applicants who are not approved for these loan rates or terms may be offered credit at a higher rate and/or with different terms. All rates are subject to change without notice. This limited-time offer may be withdrawn at any time.



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Updates to Our Member Newsletter

Heritage Financial Credit Union remains committed to providing clear communication and strengthening the ways in which we share information with our members. In support of this commitment, we are updating the format of our Member Newsletter beginning this year.

Moving forward in 2026, the newsletter will shift from four editions delivered annually through statements and eStatements to two digital editions, one sent in June and one sent in January. This update will allow us to share information more efficiently and also will support our ongoing efforts toward sustainability without compromising the quality of the information we deliver.

For your convenience, Member Newsletters will continue to be available on our website at [heritagefcu.com/resources/#newsletters](https://www.heritagefcu.com/resources/#newsletters) and will now be shared via email.

We appreciate your understanding as we make this transition, and we look forward to keeping you informed of important initiatives, member benefits, and community impact efforts throughout the year.

Clean Up Your Finances for the New Year

After a year of spending, saving, paying off bills and racking up rewards points, your financial life can get a little messy. And now that the holiday season is over, it is a great time to regain control of your finances. When you declutter your accounts, paperwork and budget, you'll find it's a lot easier to make the most of your money.

Resolve to roll up your sleeves, dust off your statements and follow these tips for finances that sparkle:

- **Streamline your banking.** Close old accounts, switch to online bill pay and sign up for eStatements to reduce paper waste. Shred year-old bank statements, expired warranties, old Social Security statements and tax documents that are over seven years old.
- **Consolidate your debt.** Consider rolling all your high-interest payments into one low-rate personal loan. Close credit cards you don't need and create a payment strategy to lower your debt. Plan to pay off credit cards with the highest interest rates first.
- **Organize your savings.** Many households have multiple savings accounts, including IRAs, CDs and 401(k)s. Consider moving all your savings plans to one bank and consolidating all IRAs to one account. Talk to your employer about moving old 401(k) accounts into the one at your current job or rolling them to a self-directed IRA. Finally, increase your 401(k) savings so that at a minimum you are saving enough to earn a full match from your employer.
- **Plan your estate.** Update or create your will. It's an easy and inexpensive process that people often put off for obvious reasons. If you have any property (car, house, land, flat-screen TV, etc.), a will prevents lengthy legal battles and guarantees the right people receive your belongings upon your passing.

Need help tidying up? Stop by your nearest HFCU branch or give us a call. We'd be more than happy to help you clean up your finances!



Post-Holiday To-Do List

No Spending Required

The holidays are a wrap, and the gifts have all been exchanged. There's no time like the present to start those post-holiday to-dos:

Check credit card statements

'Tis the season for fraud. Make sure you check statements to confirm you were charged correctly for holiday purchases – especially online transactions – and that there are no extra, unauthorized charges. Then, shred your receipts (assuming loved ones don't need them for returns).

Use gift cards

By law, gift cards can't expire in less than five years, but there are still good reasons to use them now. There may be non-use fees over time, and there's also a risk the company could go out of business or you could misplace or forget about the card. As a reminder to use it, keep your gift card in your wallet next to the debit or credit card you use most.

Hang on to used prepaid debit or credit cards

It's tempting to toss a Visa® gift card, for example, once you've used it up. But if later you return items you bought with that card, it's likely the store will issue your refund directly to that card, which you can't use if you no longer have it.

Return or donate unwanted gifts

Don't put off returns, as there's usually an expiration date.

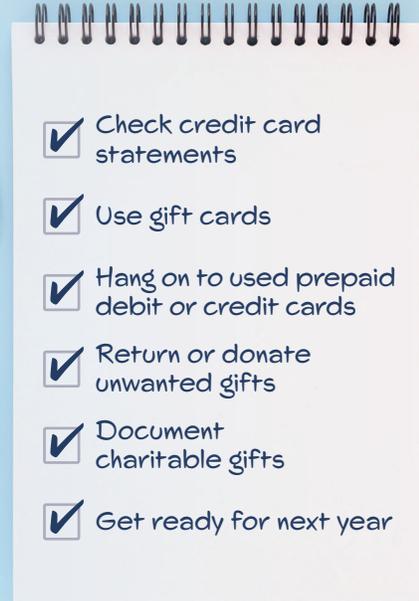
Document charitable gifts

If you made a charitable donation on behalf of a loved one as a gift, you may be able to deduct the donation to reduce your taxable income. For more information, look at Charitable Contribution Deductions on IRS.gov.

Get ready for next year

As you're cleaning up, update contact information from holiday cards or envelopes before tossing them and save bows and gift bags for re-use. Also, consider opening a holiday savings account to ease next year's purchases.

2026



- Check credit card statements
- Use gift cards
- Hang on to used prepaid debit or credit cards
- Return or donate unwanted gifts
- Document charitable gifts
- Get ready for next year



Financial
DEVELOPMENT
Center

An Extension of Heritage Financial Credit Union

29 N Hamilton St
First Floor, Suite 110
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

845.561.5607 ext. 366

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BRANCH HOURS*

MON – THURS: 8:30 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

FRI: 8:30 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

SAT: 9:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

*Please note that these hours may differ for certain locations. To view a full list of branches and their hours, please visit heritagefcu.com/find-branch.

BRANCH LOCATIONS

CENTRAL VALLEY

273 Route 32 (24hr ATM)

DINGMANS FERRY, PA

113 Atlantic Avenue (24hr Drive-Up ATM)

GOSHEN

103 Clowes Avenue (24hr Drive-Up ATM)

HERITAGE PARK

1476 NY-9D (24hr Drive-Up ATM)

MATAMORAS, PA

111 Hulst Drive (24hr ATM)

MIDDLETOWN

25 Rykowski Lane (24hr ATM)

161-5 Dolson Avenue (24hr Drive-Up ATM)

MONTGOMERY

17 Walnut Street (24hr Drive-Up ATM)

NEWBURGH

2 Corwin Court (24hr Drive-Up ATM)

211 South Plank Road (24hr Drive-Up ATM)

NEW PALTZ

234 Main Street, Suite 6B (24hr ATM)

SUNY New Paltz Campus – Lower Level of Haggerty

MON, WED, FRI Only: 10:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Closed TUES, THURS, SAT & SUN

(ATM in Student Union Building, available during building hours)

PINE BUSH

36 Boniface Drive (24hr ATM)

POUGHKEEPSIE

Financial Development Center, An Extension of Heritage Financial Credit Union

29 North Hamilton Street, First Floor, Suite 110

(ATM on premises)

MON – WED: 9:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M., 1:30 P.M. – 5:30 P.M.

TUES – THUR: 9:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

FRI: 8:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M., 1:30 P.M. – 4:30 P.M.

WASHINGTONVILLE

131 East Main Street (24hr ATM)



CONNECT WITH US:

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Kenneth Affeldt

Vice-Chairperson

Thomas Houston

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Jennifer Ryan

Secretary

Sandra Gerow

Directors

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