

UNDER THE ARCH:

Celebrating 90 Years of Gateway Metro



September 2025

What I Wish I Learned in School: How to Manage Debt

Here are nine steps for managing your debt and paying it down.

1. Organize your debt

First, list all your debts. Include credit cards, student loans, auto loans and any other outstanding balance you may carry. For each debt, note the following:

Total amount owed | Interest rate | Minimum monthly payment | Due date of monthly payment

Tally up your total debt monthly payments. Then, list your debts in order of interest rates, and then in order of outstanding balances.

2. Create a realistic budget

Track your income and expenses for several months. Then, set aside a reasonable amount for each spending category, ensuring you can adequately cover all of your monthly expenses. Finally, review your spending and look for ways you can increase your income and/or trim your expenses in any manner. Allocate these extra funds toward your debt payments.

3. Choose your debt payoff strategy

You have two primary choices here:

The avalanche method. Here, you'll start with the debt that has the highest interest rate or highest balance, and maximize payments toward paying it off, then move on to the next until you're debt-free.

The snowball method. In this method, you'll pay off the smallest debt first, and then work through the rest in ascending order.

Review each strategy carefully and choose the one that best aligns with your lifestyle.

4. Consider debt consolidation

If you're dealing with a large amount of debt, you may want to consider debt consolidation. This involves combining multiple debts into a single loan with a lower interest rate. Doing so will simplify debt management by giving you just one monthly

payment to manage, and can potentially lower overall interest paid, too.

5. Avoid accumulating additional debt

Limit the use of credit cards and refrain from financing new purchases while working on paying off debt. It may be helpful to destroy your credit cards and have your personal devices "forget" your credit card information so you don't spend mindlessly.

6. Seek professional advice

If managing debt becomes overwhelming, consider consulting a financial advisor or credit counseling service. It's important to verify any service you use by checking for an online presence, reading customer reviews, demanding complete transparency and being wary of any service that demands upfront payment and/or promises outrageous results.

7. Monitor your credit

You can obtain free credit reports once a year from each of the three major credit bureaus and check your score on sites like CreditKarma. It's also important to review your monthly credit card statements for fraud.

8. Build an emergency fund

Having an emergency fund can prevent the need to incur additional debt during unforeseen circumstances. Aim for a fund amounting to three to six months' worth of living expenses.

9. Stay committed and patient

Celebrate small victories along the way to stay motivated. Consistency and perseverance are the keys to achieving financial freedom.



Article provided by our partner, cuContent

A Primer on Irrevocable Life Insurance Trusts

"I'm proud to pay taxes in the United States; the only thing is, I could be just as proud for half the money." - Entertainer Arthur Godfrey

The irrevocable life insurance trust (ILIT) can be an important estate strategy tool that may accomplish a number of estate objectives; however, it may not be appropriate for every individual.

Using a trust involves a complex set of tax rules and regulations. Before moving forward with a trust, consider working with a professional who is familiar with the rules and regulations.

Several factors will affect the cost and availability of life insurance, including age, health, and the type and amount of insurance purchased. Life insurance policies have expenses, including mortality and other charges. If a policy is surrendered prematurely, the policyholder also may pay surrender charges and have income tax implications. You should consider determining whether you are insurable before implementing a strategy involving life insurance. Any guarantees associated with a policy are dependent on the ability of the issuing insurance company to continue making claim payments.

What Is an ILIT?

An ILIT is created by an individual (the grantor) during his or her lifetime. The ILIT owns a life insurance policy on the grantor's life via the transfer of ownership of an existing policy or through the grantor's annual contribution of cash to pay the premiums on a policy purchased by the trust.

The grantor designates beneficiaries, usually family members, who will typically receive the proceeds upon the death of the grantor.

The trust is irrevocable, meaning that the grantor forfeits all rights to the property contained in the trust. Its irrevocable nature is integral to accomplishing the ILIT's objectives.

What Can an ILIT Accomplish?

The ILIT may be able to accomplish several estate objectives, including:

1. Meeting liquidity needs;
2. Managing estate taxation on the policy proceeds;
3. Providing income to survivors.

Continued on Page 5

Would you like to discuss investments or your financial goals?

Reach out to Bill Anderson at 636-222-7585 or email banderson@hntlgh.com

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About Bill



Bill has been a financial advisor since 2012, focusing on creating a client-centric experience by providing education, organization, objectivity, proactivity, accountability, and partnership. In 2012, Bill started his financial services career at Edward Jones, providing investment services, retirement planning, protection strategies, estate planning opportunities and education savings plans for almost six years. In April of 2018, Bill moved his practice to Huntleigh Securities to provide a more customized client experience for his varied clientele and continue to grow professionally. Since then, Bill has continued to grow his services and practice, and has expanded into offering services and advice to Gateway Metro Federal Credit Union members.

Upcoming Events & Holidays

Oct 13 Columbus Day - CLOSED

Oct 17 We'll be at Boo at the Zoo!

Oct 18 Recycling Event @ North 9-11:30

Looking Ahead: We will be closed the Friday after Thanksgiving.

Hello Autumn!

September 22nd is the first day of fall! Time to trade flip-flops for fuzzy socks, embrace the crunch of leaves underfoot, and convince yourself that raking the yard is basically the gym with a scenic backdrop.



LOAN RATES

EFFECTIVE September 15th, 2025

VEHICLE LOANS

The following are approx. payback terms.

AS LOW AS

Up to 36 months	5.25% APR*
37 to 48 months	5.25% APR*
49 to 63 months	5.25% APR*

OTHER LOANS

AS LOW AS

Mortgage	Click for current rates
Share Secured	2.01% APR*
Stock Secured	9.25% APR*
Personal Loans	7.99% APR*
Personal Line of Credit	12.9% APR*

*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. Rates are subject to change, and terms and conditions apply. Our website contains the most current rates. Contact GMFCU for complete details. NMLS #410276

LOST CREDIT/DEBIT CARDS

If your GMFCU credit or debit card is lost, stolen or if you suspect unauthorized use, please call:

CREDIT CARD - (800) 558-3424 | 24/7

DEBIT CARD - (314) 621-4575 or

(800) 621-4828 during business hours or

(800) 472-3272 | 24/7

Gateway Metro Outreach Call to Action Update

Written by Jeri Peterson

We would like to thank our members for inviting Gateway Metro to be of service to organizations that are important to them. It is a treat for us to provide financial literacy and responsibility programming within your community.

St. Louis Public Library – Julia Davis Branch, North City St. Louis

Last summer, during our Free Paper Shred Event in St. Peters, one of our members, DeAnna A., happened to be wearing a St. Louis Public Library Youth Program t-shirt. I asked her if she would be interested in her credit union providing financial literacy and financial responsibility programming for her program. She could not believe it. She was thrilled. Not knowing how many young people we would encounter when we arrived in April, we came prepared with information and activities and gift bags for youth ages 5 to 12 and teens and young adults, parents and the library's dedicated staff, led by Mikaela Hampton, Regional Youth Services Supervisor. My co-worker, Jeanie, volunteered to engage with the children. *"I found my time at the library with these young minds to be challenging in a good way. It was an experience that I want to continue. They had fun. They were able to take something away from what was shared with them. We planted seeds with the hope they grow and encourage curiosity and understanding about money."* Jeanie read from age-appropriate children's books. First, the classic, "The Berenstain Bears' Dollar\$ and \$en\$e" by Stan & Jan Berenstain. The second title is by Shark Tank mogul, Daymond John, "Little Daymond Learns to Earn." They played games identifying different coins, drew on activity sheets and more. The second week they won prizes playing the PLINKO – Financial Literacy and Responsibility Game. The final week we moved from the auditorium to a portion of the computer room. There we had kids who brought in their siblings and parents when they saw us through the large glass walls. More stories were shared, pictures were made with artistic flair, and they cheered each other on as they played PLINKO and won prizes. We talked to parents about what Gateway Metro can do for their families. We discussed resources they need to tap into to meet their needs and goals at every session.



Teens and Young Adults at the Library

Imagine being prepared to have a session with children and you end up engaging ten teens. Being in front of a group of hard to impress teenagers gave me a moment of pause. I could not show fear. I was outnumbered and a bit out of practice. They are not feeling what I am doing. I pivot based on what the teens share. Next thing I know, we are creating a business and each one of them plays a specific role based on their unique interests and talents. It is magic! For this business to thrive, a burger spot, they must be able to deal with a lot beginning with their landlord who did not care about their business and only wants to be paid rent without taking care of the maintenance required. I mentioned the lesson

during this early moment is for them to be aware of those they do business with. Partner with those who care about doing right by you with you and for you. Your dollars have power. Respect is the minimum. They each speak up and take on their chosen roles. Of course, we have the teen who enjoys making plates of food for people. He's the business owner. Another is great with numbers, so he wants to manage the money, and he also suggested a viral social media moment for the company name that they all vote for. One of them enjoys providing excellent customer service, another uses his art which he is drawing during the session to advertise the company with a fun logo. I immediately identify with one young lady who is telling the others what they need to do. She lights up when she's made the business manager. A very quiet and observant young man wants to provide security for his friends and the last young man proudly wanted to keep the business clean with his janitorial services. "Who Put Cheese on My Cheeseburger" is born. The conversation around their value as human beings, what their individual talents and gifts are and the care they must take with that awareness is in real time. We even discuss having a purpose in life. Now this is a great session. They all received gift bags and were invited to come back next week for another session.

Continued on Page 4

Cont'd from Page 3: "Gateway Metro Outreach..."

That next session was centered around one young man who was starting to seriously think about the year ahead when he graduates from high school and may try out for college football. He had just celebrated his birthday. When I asked him what his plans were for his birthday money and how much did he decide to save? He said it was all gone, and he didn't remember what he bought except for buying his favorite combo from a fast-food spot. I must admit I was a bit disappointed. I felt like the previous week's session with him and the other teens was lost even though they said they appreciated my honesty and real interest in them as people. It was a cool experience. One said I gave her a lot of things to think about, and she put them in her journal so she would not forget them. I took a breath and got out of my head and dealt with the moment in front of me. I pointed out he was an unconscious spender. He thought about it and agreed. I pulled out the financial literacy book, "Finance 101 for Kids: Money Lessons Children Cannot Afford to Miss" by Walter Andal. I found a section that I thought addressed this topic. I asked him to take a moment to read it. That's when he shared, he didn't like to read. I encouraged him to take his time, and he read the brief section. He asked questions about what he read and shared that he liked having a better understanding about what was possible. I asked how he best takes in information. He prefers to listen to information rather than read it. I read the next brief section to him. He lit up. He asked more questions, so I provided more answers. We discussed the importance of having a spending plan and an accountability partner. Those ideas seemed to resonate with him. That way he was not on this journey alone as he became more aware of his behaviors. He could be empowered to work on them and see positive results. He could share what he was learning with the people he cared about and trusted. Each one, teach one. He liked these ideas. I also mentioned Gateway Metro's website has a Free online program BALANCE. It has webinars and audio sessions on topics that would be helpful to him throughout his life. He could search for podcasts online too.

Finally, we played PLINKO. He won the book 4 times! While I let him pick prizes he preferred instead, I told him, *"The universe wants you to have this information."* With a slight smile he nodded his head in agreement and took one copy of the book for the road.



Library Suffers From Tornado

Gateway Metro visited the Julia Davis Library just two weeks before the May 16 St. Louis Tornado severely damaged this vital community resource along with the Cabanne Library. Both libraries are closed until further notice. The Walnut Park Library, located at 5760 West Florissant Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63120, phone: (314) 241-2288, is available to be of service to the community.

If someone you know needs information regarding St. Louis Tornado Recovery Resources, or if you would like to donate funds to support Tornado Relief efforts, the St. Louis Public Library is providing an extensive information webpage complete with links. Go to: www.slpl.org/st-louis-tornado-recovery-resources/

The organizations featured in this series have a Gateway Metro Federal Credit Union membership connection. Gateway Metro is committed to providing support to organizations important to our membership. Please contact us if you are a Gateway Metro member interested in submitting for consideration a non-profit organization you are connected to as either an employee or a member. Your organization may receive free financial literacy and responsibility programming. This offer is available only to current full-service GMFCU members in good standing. This opportunity is non-transferable. You must have a willingness and ability to serve as facilitator between GMFCU and the organization. Please include your name, contact information, the name and address of the organization you are representing, what service the organization provides to your community, the age range of the audience and what sort of programming/topic you would like GMFCU to present. Here's our contact information: marketing@gmfcu.org.

Cont'd from Page 2: "A Primer on Irrevocable..."

How Does an ILIT Work?

When you die, the trust is designed to receive a payment equal to the policy coverage amount, e.g., \$500,000. Since the trust's ownership of the policy is irrevocable, the proceeds are not considered your property. Consequently, they do not fall into your estate, thus potentially avoiding estate taxation. (Remember, generally no income tax is due on such life insurance proceeds.)

Keep in mind, this is a hypothetical example used for illustrative purposes only. It is not representative of any specific estate or estate strategy. The information in this material is not intended as tax or legal advice. It may not be used for the purpose of avoiding any federal tax penalties. Please consult legal or tax professionals for specific information regarding your individual situation.

The trust provisions should be set up to provide direction about how and to whom payments may be made. You may direct that the trust pay out cash to cover certain expenses, e.g., funeral costs, probate, taxes, final medical expenses, and debts.

This may obviate the need to sell less liquid assets at an inopportune time to cover such costs.

The trust's beneficiaries may receive the proceeds (after any payments are made to satisfy liquidity needs), creating an inheritance free of estate taxes.

Finally, creditors should not be able to attack these assets since they belong to the trust, not you.

Creating an ILIT should be done only with the assistance of a qualified estate planning attorney. It is a complicated exercise in which mistakes may result in losing the benefits ILITs offer.

Let's Celebrate Our Members With \$90!



We're celebrating YOU this September! Every time you visit a GMFCU branch, you can enter our quarterly Member Appreciation Giveaway for a chance to win \$90. No strings attached, just our way of saying thank you for being part of the GMFCU family.

One winner is selected each quarter, and your next visit could be the lucky one! Learn more at goGMFCU.org/promos and enter during your next visit.

*Must be a member to enter. Shared Branch does not qualify. Must be 18 years or older. Each quarter we will pick another winner, totaling four winners. GMFCU staff, staff family, board members and vendors do not qualify for this drawing. Entries will reset each at the end of each quarter. Drawings end on December 31, 2025.

Open a Save to Win Certificate, You Could Win \$\$\$

Save to Win is the perfect way to save over time, receive a great rate and have a chance to win more money! It is a safe and fun way to save money at your own pace with the perk of being entered into a FREE drawing to earn more money.

Every \$25 you save each month qualifies you for one entry. You could win \$25 - \$1,000 as a monthly winner or even up to \$5,000 if you are a Quarterly winner, wow! Learn more about Save to Win online at goGMFCU.org

This certificate is one of the easiest ways to save... even when you're on a budget! If you deposit \$10 one week then another \$15 later in the month... that still qualifies you for an entry!

Save to Win is a great way to save up for the following year's holiday season or post-holiday debt payoffs without stressing yourself out. You also gain an opportunity to win more money to boost your holiday moolah even more!

*Limited to 100 entries per month.



Land 0.90% Off Your Qualified Auto Rate!



Drive Into Fall with 0.90% Off Your Loan Rate! September is here, and so is your chance to save big on your next adventure.

From now through November 28, enjoy 0.90% off your qualified rate on auto loans, motorcycles, RVs, trailers, and campers as we continue to celebrate our 90th anniversary!

Whether you're upgrading your ride or planning a fall road trip, this limited-time offer makes financing more affordable.

Don't wait, the season to save is now! Visit gogmfcu.org/auto-loan-special to apply and learn more.

*Must be eligible for membership with GMFCU. Must qualify for loan based on credit worthiness. Rates and offers current as of September 1, 2025 and are subject to change. Actual APR will be determined at the time of loan approval based on your credit, loan amount and term. Not all applicants will qualify for the lowest rate. Application must be submitted by November 30, 2025 and loan must close by December 15, 2025 to qualify. Offer ends November 30, 2025.

Security Update: Protect Your Online Information

Earlier this summer a national data breach was discovered that involved passwords from multiple sources, including most major social media platforms. As we know many of you use these platforms, we wanted to make sure you were aware of this information. A massive compilation of over 16 billion leaked passwords has been discovered, including data potentially impacting accounts from major platforms like Google, Apple, and Facebook.

Please take time to completely review this information and evaluate how it might impact you. If you use the same password on social media and other more secure platforms such as financial accounts or work systems, please update your passwords and consider using different passwords for those social media accounts than you use for other purposes.

Key Details:

- Multiple Sources:** The passwords were not all stolen from one source, but rather compiled from various databases using infostealers.
- Impact:** The leak could affect accounts on major platforms like Google, Apple, and Facebook, as well as other services like VPNs and developer platforms.
- Recommendation:** Individuals should review their account security settings, update passwords, and monitor for suspicious activity.

What to do:

- Update Passwords:** Change passwords on all your important accounts, especially those connected to the platforms mentioned.
- Enable Two-Factor Authentication:** Use two-factor authentication (2FA) wherever available for an extra layer of security.
- Monitor Account Activity:** Regularly check your account activity for any unusual logins or access attempts.
- Be Vigilant:** Stay informed about security threats and best practices for online safety.

Follow us on social media to stay in the Gateway Metro loop!

Informative articles, branch closures, upcoming events, contests and more!



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