

## Getting off the fence

If you're thinking about buying a new home, now would be a good time.

Mortgage rates are still low, and there are plenty of great government incentive programs to lower buying costs even further.

But these won't be around forever. For instance, the \$8,000 federal tax credit for first-time homebuyers is set to expire at the end of November. You're eligible if you haven't bought a home in the last three years.

To help keep their communities vibrant, several cities in the Metro Area are offering grant money to

people who buy homes within their boundaries. Last spring, CIB employee Malissa Grant and husband Collin were the first to participate in St. Louis Park's Live Where You Work Program, which provides a grant to employees of St. Louis Park businesses toward the purchase of a home near their workplace.

Similar programs are available in other communities, but each one has its own set of eligibility criteria. Whether you're a first-time buyer or



an experienced homeowner, check with the city you're interested in to see what programs they offer and whether you would qualify. Then talk with your CIB banker.

If you act soon, buying your dream home may not cost as much as you think.

fishing.  
to work.  
on vacation.  
out for dinner.  
to the beach.  
hit the links.  
up north.  
anywhere.

(((cib))) mobile banking

With CIB mobile banking you can bank safely and securely direct from your phone, regardless of where you are. What freedom! Now, no worries about getting your banking done before you go, just GO!

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## Banking on the run

You're on the go a lot these days — now you can take your banking with you.

With CIB's Mobile Banking, you can view your account information, transfer funds and pay bills from the beach, in the grocery store, over lunch, at the golf course — or anywhere else you happen to be — right from your mobile phone. CIB's Mobile Banking lets you bank safely and securely using any phone with Internet access, and there's no charge for the service.

With Mobile Banking, there's no need to remember your banking before you go. Just go — and do your banking when you're ready. Now that's banking convenience!

## Popular antidote for high medical costs

**H**igh-deductible plans may save you money on health insurance premiums, but those savings can quickly erode if your deductible medical expenses start to grow. If you're eligible, you can ease the budget pain of high medical costs by opening a Health Savings Account (HSA).

An HSA allows you to build a reserve to help pay for medical expenses your insurance doesn't cover, and gain interest and tax advantages in the process. And with an HSA from Citizens Independent Bank (CIB), you pay no maintenance or service fees.



Maintaining an HSA is like setting aside tax-free money. Your contributions are tax-deductible, and all earnings are tax-deferred. If you use the money for qualified medical expenses, your earnings are tax-free. No minimum balance is required, and there is no limit to how large the account can grow — only to the amount you can contribute each year.

The account works like an interest-bearing checking account. To cover an expense, you simply write a check, use your free Instant Cash & Check Card or Bill Pay.

You have complete control over how your money is spent.

Best of all, the money will be there until you need it, so you can continue to build the account year after year. You have complete control over how your money is spent.

If you own a business, you may want to consider offering HSAs as an employee benefit. An employee can have multiple accounts, and money can be transferred between accounts without penalty.

There are eligibility requirements, so talk with your employer or your insurance agent to see if you qualify to open an HSA. If so, contact your CIB banker. You could be giving your budget a much-needed dose of cost-relief.

## Earn more with a CIB IRA

**W**ith uncertainties surrounding the future of Social Security and employer-sponsored pensions, enjoying a financially sound retirement may increasingly depend on your own savings.

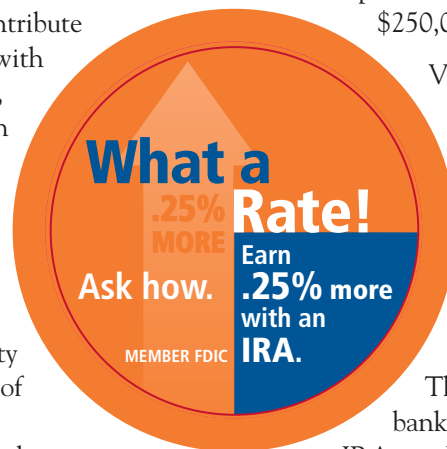
Whether you're nearing retirement or just starting your career, a good way to help ensure your financial security over the long term is to open an IRA (Individual Retirement Account). Both traditional and Roth IRAs offer tax advantages that can help your money grow faster.

The type of IRA you open and how you invest your money are totally up to you.

With a traditional IRA, earnings are tax-deferred, and your contributions may be tax-deductible. Because you contribute to a Roth IRA with after-tax dollars, your earnings on these accounts are generally tax-free.

If you're looking for investment safety at a higher rate of return, Citizens Independent Bank can help. At CIB, you can open an IRA for as little as \$100 and earn at a rate .25% higher than our current CD rate.

And your contributions are safe — the FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) insures them up to \$250,000.



Visit [www.bankcib.com](http://www.bankcib.com) for information on Internal Revenue Service rules and regulations surrounding IRAs. If you qualify, your tax accountant or financial planner can help you decide what type of IRA is best for you.

Then talk with your CIB banker. You may find that an IRA can be the best retirement investment you'll ever make.

## Investment tips

### Keeping your business healthy



Sarah Wells

Whether your company has one employee or 100, making your business thrive over the long term takes more than continuing to provide the right product or service. It also means protecting your business assets, putting the right plan in place to ensure the continuity of your business, and attracting and keeping valuable employees.

We can help you give your business a sound financial future with an entire range of brokerage services, which we offer through PrimeVest Financial Services, Inc., an independent, registered broker/dealer. Whether you already have plans in place or are just getting started, we will work closely with you to help you choose investment tools to fit your unique situation. We can help you design attractive employee benefit packages as well as investment programs for your business.

Here are some of the services we offer through PrimeVest:

#### Retirement plans

A solid retirement plan is one of the most attractive benefits you can offer employees or yourself. We provide a variety of retirement plans and programs for businesses and organizations of all sizes, including self-employed individuals. If you're looking to start a retirement plan or enhance an existing one, we can customize a program to fit your needs, including simple IRAs, SEP IRAs and individual or group 401(k)s.

#### Investment management

As your investment partner, we work with you to understand your needs, help you develop an investment strategy, design your portfolio and implement your financial plan. We also help you review your portfolio regularly and give you ideas of ways to keep your money working for you as the market, trends and tax laws\* change.

#### Insurance

We offer a variety of programs, from business overhead protection to buy-sell funding and key-person life insurance.

#### Shop our plans

When you work with a PrimeVest investment representative at Citizens Independent Bank, you receive the

same high level of service you experience with other areas of CIB. That's because as our customer, we want what's best for you.

So come in to a CIB location and talk to a PrimeVest investment representative. Explore our programs — see what we have to offer and compare them with your current financial plans, with no pressure or obligation. We look forward to seeing you!

For more information, contact Sarah Wells, Investment Executive with PrimeVest Financial Services at Citizens Independent Bank, 952-915-8560 or visit our website at [www.bankcib.com/investOverview.cfm](http://www.bankcib.com/investOverview.cfm).

PrimeVest Financial Services, Inc. is an independent, registered broker/dealer. Member SIPC/FINRA. Securities and insurance products offered by PrimeVest:

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\* Consult your legal or tax counsel for advice and information concerning your particular circumstances. Neither PRIMEVEST, nor any of its representatives may give legal or tax advice.

## Be a hero to your employees

If you're looking for ways to provide your employees with attractive benefits without breaking the company budget, consider offering them Citizens Choice.

With Citizens Choice, employees can take advantage of a variety of CIB financial services at substantial savings — with no cost to your business. They can also sign up for direct deposit payroll, which will save them trips to the bank and eliminate any worries about lost or stolen checks.

They even receive \$100 when they sign up!

All this adds up to fewer money worries for your employees. With less stress, they'll be more productive on the job — and you'll be their hero.

Talk to your CIB banker about Citizens Choice and check out the many perks it offers. If Citizens Choice sounds right for your business, a CIB representative will visit your workplace to explain the program to employees and answer their questions.





**Join us for Fezziwig's Christmas Carol Feast, Thursday, Dec. 10**

You are invited to travel back to 1843 with your Gold Club friends as a "guest" at Fezziwig's annual party held at Wigington Hall on Harriet Island. Dickensian-costumed characters will welcome you and as you sip spiced cider while warming yourself by a roaring fire and listening to live Celtic music. Soon after you'll enjoy a scrumptious feast and a delightful staging of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol."

This is only one of the exciting events Gold Club members enjoy throughout the year. They also have a variety of privileges, including free checks, travel cards and money orders, notary service and photocopies, plus an Instant Cash and Check card, direct deposit, automatic transfers and more.

Joining Citizen Gold Club is easy, and you may already qualify. Ask your CIB banker for details.

**Look at all the fun we had this summer!**

There was the St. Louis Park Parktacular parade...the Hopkins Raspberry Festival Parade...and don't forget all those great Robin Sundaes we served at the Robbinsdale Whiz Bang Days Plaza Party. Gee, we hope you had as much fun as we did this summer!



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