

CAAB's newsletter is designed to ensure that our IDA/MDA Savers are fully informed about relevant money management topics, effective savings strategies, financial education opportunities in the DC area, and upcoming CAAB events. Every month, we will feature a different article focusing on strategies or products that can help you plan for and achieve your savings goals.

Marrying Your Money

By Donna V.S. Ortega

My husband and I recently attended a beautiful wedding for some close friends. The bride was lovely, the groom was proud, and the cake was delicious. The wedding gift we ordered for them hasn't arrived yet, so this column is my gift to them until the saucer gets there. As they embark on their life together, I want to share the simple steps that can help them grow their bond and find success together financially: 1) communicate openly and set your goals together, and 2) find the system that works for you as a family.

COMMUNICATE AND SET GOALS TOGETHER

Many personal finance writers will say that the most important thing to do about your finances in a marriage is to communicate. That can be difficult to do. Most people would probably rather talk about anything else than talk about money. But it's necessary to know where each partner is coming from in order to be able to set your common goals. And money can be a huge factor in the success of a marriage. A 2006 survey of 189 financial planners conducted by USA Today and the Financial Planning Association found that nearly 40% of financial planners who have worked with divorcing couples say that money is frequently a "key factor" in couples'

decisions to split up.

Being open with my husband K about finances hasn't always been easy (we had very different upbringings which shaped the way we each think about where to splurge and where to save), but it's always been helpful and it's even brought us closer together (we both get a kick out of seeing our house fund grow



each month through our regular deposits and interest, and we shared the pain when the interest rates changed and lowered the amount we accrued).

To talk about money openly and honestly, it's important to set ground rules, pick a neutral time, and focus on your common goals. Some good topics to guide your discussions can be found at www.practicalmoneyskills.com/english/at_home/columns/open_communication_091407.php. Besides our dream house, K and I also both think about how much money we need to be

putting away for retirement. We've each seen loved ones go through extended senior care and know how quickly that can eat away at savings. Through talking about what motivates us to save or spend we've renewed our commitment to saving for our future, together.

FIND THE SYSTEM THAT WORKS FOR YOU

With all of this openness about money, you'd probably think we combine all of our finances, but we don't. We've instead come up with a system that works for us. We wanted to have "us" money, but also have the autonomy to save for and take care of our individual wants and needs. We set our budget for our "us" things (rent, groceries, meals out together, vacations, our "dream house") and each month we put a set amount into our joint accounts to cover these expenses. The amount we each contribute is based on our salaries. As our situations change, we revisit our budget and the amount we put away toward our goals and adjust accordingly. We have one joint credit card paid for out of our joint funds, but we also each retain credit cards in our own names, and pay for those out of our separate checking and savings accounts.

So far it's been working well, but we know our way isn't the only way. The important thing is to find what works for you. Think about the goals you set

CONGRATULATIONS!

The following savers made asset purchases in the month of June:

Home

Ellen Giles
Shimona Ingram
Christine Walker

Education

Shanita Conley
Prince Davis
Samuel Eboweme
Hershell Hager
Kenneth Horne
Cynthia Quispe
Nashae Raynor
Talia Renfroe
Sherry Richardson
Cynthia Simon
Tewelde Tesfagabir
Christine Walker
Karen White
Shavonne Williams
Tarnisha Williams
Alemshet Woldeab
Qi Zhang

Small Business

Segu Yemane

together for your future—how will you reach them? There are online tools to help you set a realistic budget at www.practicalmoneyskills.com. And a thoughtful discussion about whether to go joint or separate can be found at www.getrichslowly.org/blog/2007/04/25/which-should-you-choose-joint-or-separate-finances/.

To R and S, and the countless other couples who will be tying the knot this wedding season, we wish you the best of luck, and happy saving. It's not as exciting as planning the wedding, but planning your financial futures together will keep you on track to getting to your happily ever after.

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Money Management Classes at CAAB

at 1801 K St NW, Suite M100 (Farragut West & Farragut North metro stops)

New round of Money Management classes starts next month.

(Free) Complete your financial education requirements for the IDA or MDA program and meet other people saving towards their life goals just like you.

Call 202-419-1440 to register. Saturdays, August 2 through September 6, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| August 2 | Creating wealth, setting financial goals, and tracking expenses |
| August 9 | Budgeting |
| August 16 | Understanding Credit |
| August 23 | Knowing Your Rights |
| Sept 6 | Financial Institutions and Products |

Free Business Seminars

at 961 H Street NE (Union Station metro)

Presented by The Washington Area Community Investment Fund, Inc. (WACIF). Please RSVP by emailing amann@wacif.org or calling 202-529-5505.

So You Want to Start a Restaurant? (free) An industry expert walks you through the steps of opening an eating establishment as well as the pitfalls to avoid. July 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

E-Commerce (free) Learn how to use the internet to grow your small business. Topics include: website development, directories, search engines, and on-line advertisement. August 7, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Marketing to the Government (free) Learn about the Local, Small, Disadvantaged, Business Enterprise (LSDBE) program and how to market to the government. August 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Free Business Planning Process Seminar

at Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, 901 G Street NW (Gallery Pl-Chinatown or Metro Center metro stops)

This seminar provides an overview of the thought process that goes into the development of the business plan document and a discussion of the reasons why. The seminar will be held on Thursday, August 7 from 10:00-12:00 p.m.



Together Is Better

The Campaign to Strengthen
DC Families, Marriages & Communities

What: FREE Two Day Workshop offering you the chance to learn and be trained in how to have the best intimate relationships, communication, and financial stability. Training is for both couples and singles.

When: July 19 & 26, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Where: FBR Branch Boys & Girls Club, 1901 Mississippi Avenue, SE (Southern Avenue Metro Stop)

For more information and to register, contact A. Hughes of ALS- Singles Wholeness & Marriage Savers at 202-269-3449.

Attention IDA Business Savers!

Help Improve your
Business with Quick-
books Training



What: Quickbooks Classes-Group 1

Where: LEDC's Maryland Office, 11319 Elkin Street, Wheaton, MD 20902

When: August 1-22, 6-8 p.m. (call for more detailed information about days the class will meet)

For more information contact **Eric Aldrett at 240-777-4957**. Course is bilingual and there is a \$200 administrative fee.

Savers Humor

A tour guide was showing a tourist around Washington, DC. The guide pointed out the place where George Washington supposedly threw a dollar across the Potomac River. "That's impossible," said the tourist. "No one could throw a coin that far!" "You have to remember," answered the guide. "A dollar went a lot farther in those days."

CAAB CORNER



On June 26, CAAB celebrated the accomplishments of IDA savers who graduated or made an asset purchase in 2007 with its first annual commencement celebration. The event included a buffet reception, gifts for graduates and successful savers, and prizes including two \$100 gift cards and a savings bond. In addition to recognizing the accomplishments of our IDA Savers, attendees also heard inspiring words from keynote speaker Furard Tate who

challenged the audience to continue saving and to make it a lifestyle. His inspiring words brought savers to their feet-looking backwards to see where they came from, and reaching forward to see the extent of their reach with their newfound savings skills and CAAB's continued support. The attendees also heard from IDA Graduate Jennie Huffman who spoke about her personal journey in the IDA program and how grateful she is for CAAB. IDA Graduates Joey Betts and Heidi Hawkins generously displayed skills that the IDA program helped them each develop. Heidi, who went to culinary school with the help of her IDA, provided the delicious cakes for the event. Joey, who invested his IDA in his printing business, donated printing services for the event. We look forward to the class of 2008 at next year's celebration!



Capital Area Asset
Builders
1801 K Street NW
Suite M100
Washington, DC 20006
Phone: 202-419-1440

