

From The Desk Of...

Gary Jarvis - Vice President



We Love Our Niche'... And We Are Sticking To It!

On the wall of my downstairs family room hang autographed pictures of two of my lifelong athletic heroes. Muhammad Ali standing over Sonny Liston after the knockout punch that sent him to the mat and the biggest fight of all-time; Muhammad Ali/Smokin' Joe Frazier in the 1975 fight of the century "Thriller in Manila." Two other pictures are of the great Michael Jordan shooting a 3-pointer in his last shot of his college career winning the NCAA championship game; along with his last shot in a Chicago Bulls uniform with 6.2 seconds to beat the Utah Jazz for another championship ring. The last; a rare black & white profile portrait of both athletes autographed by Muhammad Ali.

As we go through life many people touch our lives in variety of ways. In my credit union professional life I have had the opportunity in the past two years to attend Western Cuna Management School where I met a man who would be of the highest role model to all credit union professionals. It's rare to meet someone so involved and dedicated in the credit union movement world wide, but to listen to Dr. James D Likens speak with such passion about the future of credit unions is certainly an honor that I take very seriously.

Dr. James D Likens has a B.A. in economics, B.A. in management and a Ph.D in economics. Dr. Likens has received more awards than I have room for. To mention a couple; He is a past recipient of the R.J. Wig Distinguished Teaching Award at Pomona College where he is President and Dean of students, in 2005 he was given the Herb Wegner Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award, the highest honor bestowed in the U.S. credit union movement. In his scholarly research Dr. Likens uses his background in economics to analyze the changing competitive environment of credit unions in the consumer financial services industry. This past July at WCMS while Dr. Likens was speaking to our class



he shared a story that really hit home to me and my immediate thought was that I needed to share it with you, our membership.

The message in his speech that morning was to find your Niche' in your own financial service industry and do it better than anyone else. When he told the story it made me think of our credit union, our Niche' in our community and how proud I 'am of all the things we do very well. Here's how the story went:

Dr. Likens and a longtime friend were out golfing one morning at an oceanfront California Coastline golf course. While waiting to tee off they were observing and enjoying the shellfish that were attached to the rock on the Coastline. Of course in Dr. Likens analogy of the shellfish he related it to credit unions' today; "The shellfish place themselves so that they are not too high on the rock in the heat of the sun, not too low where they might drown, but they have found their Niche' where they get just enough spray from the waves that hit the rocks so they can thrive."

In our very competitive credit union environment here in Spokane we are very pleased with our little piece of the pie, "Our Niche". We don't try to compete at the top of the rock with the largest financial institutions; we don't plan on being under water either. We simply plan on following through with our Mission Statement:

"To provide the best quality products and services available to meet the needs of our members."



Our overall vision will always be to give back to our membership with every service or product we offer. Sometimes it is as simple as immediate service at the drive-up window or an employee resolving your problem without sending you to a voice mailbox. It can also be as big as the refinance of your vehicle loan while lowering your rate as much as 1% apr or a fixed rate 2nd mortgage as low as 6.99% apr for your debt consolidation and as BIG as 12% apy on a Christmas Club account!

We really like having fun too! Almost 350 members enjoyed ribs and chicken along with all the fixin's at our Annual Meeting in February, then danced the night away with a live band after dinner. Pig Out On Sinto Street member appreciation day picnic in August cooked up over 150 hamburgers and 200 plus german sausages!

We love our Niche'...

AND we're sticking to it!

Your Truly,

Gary Jarvis