



OUR NEIGHBOR CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

Going Local: Why Your Money Belongs Where Your Heart Is



*Jason Winter
President*

In a group I was with a few weeks ago, the conversation took a turn that really got me thinking. One person made a passionate argument for putting savings in an online-only bank. The argument was straightforward. An online-only bank was offering a fraction of a percentage more in interest. This person advocated chasing the highest rate possible. On the surface, it is a beneficial strategy. In a world of mobile apps and digital receipts, it is easy to think of your

hard-earned savings as nothing more than a balance on a smartphone. But as I looked around that room, and as I look out at our neighbors here in Norwood Young America and the surrounding towns, I am reminded that where you keep your money determines exactly where that money goes to work.

When you choose Citizens, your deposits do not fly off to build a skyscraper in New York City or a server farm in Silicon Valley. They stay right here in the surrounding local communities. That is a distinction that the big banks and the big credit unions cannot claim. Whether you live in Carver, Sibley, or McLeod County, your savings account is the very same fund that helps the family down the street buy their first home. It is the capital that allows the local hardware store to expand its inventory for the spring season or helps a young farmer get the equipment he needs for the next harvest. While those massive institutions often rely on rigid rules and one size fits all formulas, we have real conversations. We know our teachers and our local entrepreneurs by name. We understand that a person's character and their commitment to this community are worth much more than a credit score generated by a computer in another time zone.

The allure of a slightly higher rate at an online-only bank comes with a hidden cost that you will not see on a monthly statement. It is the loss of local reinvestment. Those digital only institutions will not be sponsoring our youth baseball teams. They will not be showing up for the Stiftungsfest celebration or sitting on the chamber board or school board to ensure our community stays strong. When you have a problem or a unique situation that does not fit into a neat little box, those big banks will put you on hold with a call center. At a big bank, you are a line item. At a credit union, you might be a member, but often you are just one person in a massive and impersonal pool of thousands.

This local commitment is something we took to heart this past year. I was particularly proud that our bank was able to step up for our local schools. We were able to donate the funds that allowed them to buy a new set of instruments for the band room to make sure our student musicians have what they need to succeed. We also provided funds for new equipment for our local FFA chapter to support the next generation of leaders in our agricultural community. These are the kinds of investments that happen when your bank is your neighbor.

Choosing where to bank is an investment in the future of Norwood Young America. We offer competitive rates and the same modern technology you would find at any of the giants, but we pair it with a handshake and a deep-rooted commitment to see this area thrive. Interest rates may fluctuate from month to month, but the value of a neighbor you can actually talk to is constant. I believe our town is worth more than a few extra pennies on a spreadsheet. We have been here through the good times and the lean ones, and we plan on being here for many years to come. Thank you for keeping your roots and your resources right here at home. It is an honor to serve this community and work alongside all of you to keep our local economy strong.

Person to person. Neighbor to neighbor. Yesterday, today and tomorrow.
www.CitizensStateBankNYA.com

You deserve ag lenders who know you

If you've driven the back roads around Norwood Young America lately, you've seen how farming has changed. Bigger equipment. Bigger yields. Tighter margins. Farming carries with it decisions that have to be made faster than ever. What hasn't changed is the need for a lender who answers the phone, understands your operation, and can move when timing matters. That's what Citizens State Bank has been doing right here in our area since 1914. We know the local outlets and options that matter to your operation, from the ethanol plant to the elevator to CHS and Cargill.

Even if you're not in agriculture, this is still your story. The strength of farming across Carver, McLeod, and Sibley counties supports the businesses on Main Street, the tax base that funds our schools, and the character of the communities we all call home.

Our ag lenders know these roads because they drive them every day. They understand local soil conditions, how a wet spring can set a season back, and what land values actually look like around here. Several grew up in farming families in and around NYA. They've put up hay, worked through tough harvests, and seen firsthand what happens when a lender doesn't understand the operation behind the numbers. That experience is a big reason our customers stick with us.

When you sit down with us, you're talking to the person who will make the decision. Your loan isn't sent off to a committee in another state. It's handled right here. Last spring, when a local producer needed to move quickly on a land purchase, we turned it around in a matter of days. When things get challenging, we're not stuck getting up to speed. We already know your story.

We offer operating lines of credit, equipment financing, real estate loans, and livestock financing, with terms and repayment schedules built around how your operation actually runs. And when you bank here, your deposits stay here, supporting local farms, businesses, and families across our area. Farming doesn't follow a template, and financing shouldn't either.

See one of our knowledgeable ag lenders today for all your ag lending needs.



Scholarship Presentation

Kelli Stuewe of Citizens State Bank was honored to award our annual Outstanding Citizen Scholarship to Zachary Wickenhauser, who was selected for outstanding academic achievements and community involvement.



Employees mark milestones

Citizens State Bank recently recognized two employees for reaching years-of-service milestones. They are left to right: Joyce Heckmann (30 years) and David Cloutier (10 years).

Citizens celebrates Dairy Day Thursday, June 11

The bank is hosting its annual
make your own sundae
from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Enjoy free ice cream, ice cold milk, cheese and crackers.
Watch our website for more details.

We know the questions you don't know to ask yet.



We've helped hundreds of entrepreneurs through every stage. We will ask the right questions before they become expensive mistakes.

QUESTIONS WE HELP YOU ANSWER

- How much do I actually need? Not just startup costs — cash flow gaps, slow months, and the unexpected.
- Should I be an LLC, S-Corp, or sole proprietor? The answer affects your taxes, liability, and lending options.
- When should I get a business account vs. a line of credit? Most people wait too long on both.
- What do lenders actually look for? We'll help you decide what should be put in place now, so doors open for you later.

Come in with your idea. Leave with a plan.

Employee Spotlight



Joyce Heckmann
Teller / Bookkeeper

Name: Joyce Heckmann
Position at Bank: Teller / Bookkeeper
Years in Banking: 30
Favorite Games to Play: Blank Slate, Farkle, 500 card game.
Favorite TV Shows: Dancing with the Stars, Doc, The Floor.
Memorable vacations you've taken: Hawaii, Treasures of Europe Tour.
Favorite Pastimes: Polka dancing, Going to plays, Baking with my granddaughter.
Favorite Quotes: Choose faith over worry. Always have a grateful heart.

Favorite Movies:

A Walk to Remember, While You Were Sleeping, and The Ultimate Gift.

Something that most people don't know about you:

I was the first receptionist for the bank.

Family, where you live: I have a son, Jeremy, and a daughter, Jill, along with my son-in-law, Mark. I'm also lucky to be a grandparent to Alex and Maddie! I live out in the country near Hamburg.



Let us help you navigate when to refinance your home.

Refinancing your mortgage can be a smart way to improve your financial outlook, and Citizens State Bank is here to help guide you through the process. If you purchased your home in the last couple of years, now may be a great time to review whether refinancing makes sense for your situation. Our knowledgeable team at Citizens State Bank can help you evaluate your options and understand potential savings or benefits. We take the time to explain current market conditions so you can make confident, informed decisions. Stop in and talk with us, and we can even keep an eye on interest rate trends for you as they change. That way, you don't have to monitor the market on your own while trying to decide the right timing. Our team is committed to making the refinancing process simple, clear, and stress-free for you.



Citizens was one of the best decisions I ever made!

After years with a large regional bank, in 2019 I decided to make a change and I came to Citizens. It has turned out to be one of the best decisions I ever made as a small business owner. They welcomed me, learned my business, and treated me like a neighbor, not just an account number. The fees I had grown used to paying elsewhere were nonexistent here. When my building needed a new roof, Citizens was right there with the financing I needed, no hassle. I recently sold my business, but I am still banking with Citizens personally. This is what community banking is all about.

Joyce Litfin



Member FDIC

NMLS #629780

952-467-3000

409 Faxon Road, Norwood Young America
www.CitizensStateBankNYA.com



The best checking accounts are at Citizens!

Citizens State Bank provides the simplest, best checking accounts in the market. Our accounts are designed with customers' needs in mind.

Other banks make you jump through hoops with fine print, high minimum balances, mandatory direct deposits and tons of rules to avoid getting whacked with a high monthly service charge. We set our accounts up differently.

Need a free checking account with no minimum balance, no monthly service charge, no minimum number of transactions, a debit card, online banking and bill pay, mobile deposit and choice of paper statements or eStatements? We've got it!

Want a checking account that pays interest for balances greater than \$1000? We've got it!

Are you a business that needs the best accounts while having a bank with staff to handle your business needs? We've got it!

While other banks set their accounts up in a confusing matrix to catch customers in fees, we keep it simple and transparent. Dare to compare. We want to be your bank.



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