

The Minnco Messenger



Thank you, Minnco members!

The Messenger spoke with Shelly Miller, Minnco’s Community Engagement Coordinator, regarding this year’s successful *Angel Tree* program.

This was your first Angel Tree experience. What were your first impressions?

Shelly: Our members are awesome! I cannot believe how many families we helped and how many presents were given to children.

Over 500 names were on the tree this year. What challenges did that pose?

Shelly: I think the biggest challenge was the sheer number of names. We went from 345 names last year to 501 this year. That's a big jump! I think it's due to the economy and everything being more expensive. People can either put gas in their car or they can buy Christmas gifts. The need was so great this year.

Did you have a favorite moment you could share?

Shelly: One that stands out was when we delivered gifts to one of the newer schools we help. They aren’t as familiar with Minnco—or its members—and were overwhelmed when we came. We kept bringing in gifts and they called for more teachers to come and help. They were putting them on a cart and the cart was filling up, and they were completely amazed at what was donated. The best part was knowing that they were going to kids that really wanted those gifts and really needed some help with Christmas cheer.

Do you have any other thoughts you’d like to share?

Shelly: Not only did our members step up to make this a wonderful Christmas for kids, but our employees did, too. Every year they organize it, collect and track names, make sure gifts are returned on time, and coordinate delivery of the gifts. They take a personal interest in helping these kids. When we still had dozens of names remaining on the tree, they took care of them. I think that's just wonderful.

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16
organizations

188
families

501
children

1137
gifts



Doug Hallstrom
President/CEO

President's Report

What a difference a year can make! In contrast to last December, when we were amidst a deep freeze and bracing for an impending blizzard, the weather as I write this is nearly 40 degrees with rain and not a speck of snow on the ground. It's somewhat amusing that our current loan campaign mirrors the popular acronym **FOMO**, but with a wintry twist—**Fear Of Missing Outdoors**. This encapsulates all the excitement that a Minnesota winter offers, from snowmobiling and four-wheeling to ice fishing. Minnco is proud to extend excellent financing options for all your winter-related toys or equipment needs. Yet what if our **Fear of Missing Outdoors** wasn't due to the absence of a sled, UTV, or ice-fishing trailer, but rather the scarcity of winter itself? Have faith, for the ice will freeze, the snow will fall, and the opportunities for outdoor fun will undoubtedly arrive.

Reflecting on the past year, it's good to contemplate the changes that unfolded. The journey began with the opening of our Princeton branch and continued through the relocation of our North Branch office. The Princeton branch has been warmly embraced by local members, eliminating the need to commute to Cambridge for services. The word is spreading, and more individuals are discovering the advantages of Minnco each day. They appreciate having a local financial institution that strongly supports the community and offers all the essential services. If you haven't explored the Princeton branch yet, I extend a warm invitation to do so.

Additionally, I encourage you to visit our newly relocated North Branch office when you get the chance—just across Highway 95 and one block west from our former location. The changes in North Branch are a testament to our success in serving the community. Since our first office in 2000, a leased space near Merchant's Cafe, we've grown significantly. Recognizing the need for more space, we built a new office just five years later, featuring an expanded area, drive-thru capability, and additional offices. Late last year, seizing the opportunity to purchase and renovate a vacant bank building, we aimed to enhance the experience for both staff and members. This resulted in a larger drive-thru area, a more welcoming lobby, extra offices, and a traditional teller line alongside an expanded Member Service area.

Minnco has consistently prioritized giving back to our communities over the years. To streamline and manage these efforts, we welcomed Shelly Miller as our Community Engagement Coordinator in 2023. Shelly's vibrant personality and can-do spirit shine through in the events she supports. Her efforts were instrumental in Minnco receiving recognition and awards (Engagement and Outreach) within the credit union industry for our *Back to School Supply Drive*. Additionally, her assistance with our *Angel Tree* program, along with the generosity of our membership, enabled us to donate over 1100 gifts to 501 kids this holiday season. The collective efforts of our approximately 100 employees—over 1000 hours volunteered within our communities—underscores our commitment to community service. Elsewhere in *The Messenger* you'll find more examples of Minnco employees making a difference in our communities.

Despite the uncertainties surrounding the economy, inflation, interest rates, housing, and the political arena, we look forward to serving your financial needs in 2024. Minnco stands in a robust and healthy financial position with over \$500,000,000 in assets, poised to navigate challenges and adapt as needed. We deeply value your membership and loyalty. I extend my best wishes to you and your loved ones for a fantastic 2024.



IMPROVE? OR MOVE?

The decision between improving your current home and buying a new one is a significant consideration that depends on a number of factors, including your financial situation, lifestyle preferences, and long-term goals. Both options have their merits, and understanding the pros and cons can help you make an informed decision.

IMPROVE YOUR HOME

Pros:

- **Cost-Effective:** Home improvements, when compared to the cost of buying a new home, can often be more budget-friendly. You have the flexibility to tackle projects one at a time based on your current financial situation.
- **Personalization:** Renovating allows you to customize your current space according to your preferences and lifestyle. Whether it's a kitchen upgrade, a bathroom remodel, or adding an extension, you have control over the design and functionality.
- **Avoiding Moving Hassles:** Moving to a new home involves a considerable amount of time, effort, and stress. Staying in your current home and improving it allows you to avoid the challenges associated with moving.
- **Increased Property Value:** Well-planned and executed home improvements can enhance the resale value of your property. This can be a wise investment if you plan to sell in the future.

CONS:

- **Limitations:** Depending on the existing structure and local regulations, there may be limitations to the extent of improvements you can make. Zoning laws, property size, and structural considerations can impact plans.
- **Disruption:** Home renovations can be disruptive to your daily life. Living in a construction zone can be inconvenient, and some projects may require you to temporarily move out.

MOVE TO A NEW HOME

PROS:

- **Fresh Start:** Buying a new home provides an opportunity for a fresh start. You can find a property that better suits your current needs, whether it's more space, a different neighborhood, or specific amenities.
- **Avoiding Renovation Stress:** If you prefer not to deal with the hassles of renovation, buying a move-in-ready home can be appealing. You won't need to oversee

construction, and you can begin enjoying your new space almost immediately.

- **Updated Features:** Newer homes often come with modern features and energy-efficient technologies that may not be present in your current home.

CONS:

- **Costly:** Buying a new home can be a significant financial commitment. In addition to the purchase price, there are closing costs, moving expenses, and potential renovations or upgrades to consider.
- **Market Conditions:** Real estate market conditions can impact your ability to find the ideal home within your budget. In a competitive market, finding a suitable property at an affordable price may be challenging.
- **Emotional Attachment:** Leaving a home where you've built memories can be emotionally challenging. The process of detaching from your current home and adjusting to a new environment can be difficult.

Ultimately, the decision depends on your unique circumstances and financial situation. Carefully assess the costs, benefits, and potential challenges of each option to make the choice that aligns with your goals and priorities. Whichever direction you choose, **Minnco has financing options to help you!** We have an experienced mortgage team if you decide to buy a new home. If, instead, you decide to stay put and make improvements, we offer Home Equity and Home Improvement loans to help you achieve your dream home.

Give us a call or stop in for a visit if you'd like to discuss your options.



2023 Holiday Moments



Minnco was able to once again create some special *Holiday Moments* for a number of local organizations. As part of our commitment to the communities we serve, donations were presented to twelve non-profits. In partnership with the Minnco Foundation, each Minnco office selected one or more organizations to be blessed. Starting at the top right and working clockwise, here are the 2023 recipients.

Rivers of Hope is a domestic and family abuse prevention non-profit. Their mission is to provide a community-coordinated response to end family violence through advocacy, education, and inter-agency collaboration.

Mission 61 provides transitional housing for men, women, and children in crisis, along with education and counseling.

Options, Inc. is a private non-profit, offering services that develop and maintain life skills for people with developmental disabilities or related conditions so individuals can fully participate in their community.

Haven for Heroes is a lodging facility providing recovery and transitional housing to service members and veterans.

Passing the Bread is a non-profit food distribution serving the Princeton and Zimmerman area.

Senior Activity Center (SAC), is a non-profit that provides a place for seniors to socialize, participate in activities, and receive educational information.

Isanti County Integrated Collaborative works to improve the social, emotional, educational, and economic outcomes for children and families in Isanti County.

Allina Health Foundation at the Cambridge Medical Center works to expand the mental health service offerings to local schools and surrounding areas.

Friends of Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge nurtures an appreciation for and the conservation of the wildlife refuge through education, volunteerism, and philanthropy.

Vikings Vittles has a weekend backpack program providing food for elementary-aged children. They also work with the area high school and middle school to provide items for their Care Closets, including food, school supplies, personal care products, jackets, hats, and gloves.

Hope4Youth is a shelter working with teens to provide pathways to end homelessness. They do so by meeting their basic needs and giving them the tools to thrive.

Memory Care at Grace Point Crossing provides a vibrant setting where dedicated staff serve the unique needs of those with dementia.



Community Involvement at a Glance



Cambridge Middle School Color Run

Isanti Middle School Color Run

International Credit Union Day



Cambridge Main St. Trick or Treat

St Francis Trick or Treat

Snowflake Parade

Salvation Army Bell Ringing, Cambridge

Salvation Army Bell Ringing, Isanti



Salvation Army Bell Ringing, Princeton

MINGO Party

Illuminate Isanti

Light up Princeton

Phishing has become the most prevalent category of cybercrime, particularly among citizens aged 60 and older.

Protect Yourself Against Cybercriminals



Minnco will NEVER email, call, or text you and ask for your account information.

If you get a call from Minnco and something seems off, ask the person you're speaking with for their name and extension. Tell them you'll call them back. Dial 763-689-1071, enter the extension when prompted, or wait for a live person to transfer you. **It's always better to be safe than sorry.** Scammers are able to spoof phone numbers, meaning they can make it appear as if they are calling from a number that isn't theirs. Even if it appears the call is coming from Minnco, it might not be. If you aren't expecting a call from us, or the caller is asking you to reveal personal information, hang up and call Minnco directly.

Only scammers will demand payment by gift card, money transfer, or crypto. Period.

Scammers love to get people to pay these ways because it's easy for them to disappear with your money—and hard for you to get it back.

Monitor your checking account.

If you subscribe to ID SafeChoice as part of your Minnco checking account, you have resources available if you feel you're a victim of identity theft. A professional recovery advocate can help protect your good name! For information on ID SafeChoice, speak to an MSR or visit minnco.com.



Check out Minnco's **HIGH-YIELD** student spending account!

Members 13 to 22 can open a high-yield spending account and earn **5.00%*** APY on balances up to \$1,000! There's no catch, **no minimum balance**, and **no monthly qualifications!** A contactless debit card allows you to pay for items wherever Mastercard® is accepted, which is helpful when you're at an event that doesn't accept cash. And with our mobile banking app, you can access funds 24/7 and pay friends using **Pay a Person!**

5.00% APY*
on balances up to \$1,000

Minnco's
stepUP
Student Spending Account

Give your child a **step up** on their financial future.

*Annual Percentage Yield. 5.00% on balances up to \$1,000; .05% on balances over \$1,000. Rates are subject to change.

Federally Insured by
NCUA

Candidates needed for volunteer positions

Minnco is seeking candidates to fill open positions on the Board of Directors and Supervisory Committee. If you have an interest in serving, pick up an application at a Minnco office, indicate which position you're interested in applying for, and include a short biography. Applications must be returned by **Friday, February 16, 2024**. If you have any questions or would like more information, please call the credit union at 763-689-1071, and leave a message for the nominating committee.



PRIVACY NOTICE AND DISCLOSURE

Minnco Credit Union's Privacy Notice and Disclosure can be viewed online at

<https://www.minnco.com/resources/privacy-policy>

Visit CO-OP Shared Branch Locations For Convenient Transactions Coast to Coast



Make yourself at home at branch locations across the country. Just look for the CO-OP Shared Branch logo to make a variety of common transactions.

Minnco's participation in CO-OP's Shared Branch network can provide you with added convenience and flexibility in managing your finances. Shared Branching allows you to conduct transactions at branches of other credit unions within the network as if you were at a Minnco office.

Find Participating Credit Unions:

Identify participating credit unions by searching on minnco.com. Go to *Personal/Other/Shared Branching*. Click on "Find a Shared Branch." You can also locate shared branches in the *MinncoMobile* app. Click on the *MORE* menu in the lower right corner. Then click *Locations > Search > Input zip code*. This will show you all Minnco offices, Shared Branching locations, and ATMs in the area. Click *Search Options* to filter shared branch locations only. Shared branches will display the CO-OP Shared Branching logo inside their office, usually near the front door or the teller line.

Bring ID and account information:

When visiting a shared branch, bring identification (such as a driver's license or passport) and your account information. This ensures a smooth and secure transaction process.

Access ATMs nationwide:

In addition to shared branches, Minnco also belongs to CO-OP's ATM network and the *MoneyPass* network. These networks provide access to over 50,000 ATMs across the country, without fees.

Special Holiday Hours

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Monday, January 15, 2024

All lobbies and drive-ups will be CLOSED
for employee training.

President's Day

Monday, February 19, 2024

Lobbies will be CLOSED and drive-ups will be OPEN from 10:00
am–6:00 pm at all offices except for Minnco Center. Minnco
Center's lobby and drive-ups will be OPEN their regular hours.



Your **Community** Credit Union.

www.minnco.com

763-689-1071



This credit union is Federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration.

We do business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Housing Opportunity Act.

