



**For further Information contact:**  
**Bob Washburn**  
**(336) 246-4344**  
**PO Box 26**  
**West Jefferson, NC 28694**  
**[rwashburn@golifestore.com](mailto:rwashburn@golifestore.com)**

## **LifeStore Financial Group Reports Earnings Increase for Year-End**

West Jefferson, NC – LifeStore Financial Group (LSFG), the holding company for LifeStore Bank and LifeStore Insurance Services, Inc., recently reported net income of \$2,345,110 for the year ended June 30, 2017, an increase of 15.9% over the prior year.

This represents the seventh consecutive year of double digit earnings increases for LifeStore who also grew the balance sheet of the bank for the second consecutive year, by just under \$10 million dollars or 3.7%. Non-interest income grew \$343 thousand dollars to \$7.6 million or 4.7%. The bank continues to reduce classified assets and saw them slip from \$8.3 million to \$6.4 million, or a reduction of 23.5%.

The Insurance division had good growth in its property and casualty areas (13.5%), as well as an increase in net income, to \$615,043 (15.5%). In March, LifeStore Insurance purchased its second insurance agency in two years, Greystone Insurance in Boone. Greystone is now operating as a division of LifeStore Insurance. These purchases enlarge the insurance footprint and help LifeStore maintain strong relationships and create more selection for its customers by adding additional carriers.

LifeStore President and CEO Bob Washburn said, "We believe our strength is being the only truly local hometown bank. We recognize that during an era when banks are getting larger, there is strength in our local service. Since our bank was established in 1939, our goal has been simple: provide high-quality banking services to our community, with an emphasis on treating our customers like neighbors, not numbers."

In a recent LifeStore customer survey, many respondents characterized this philosophy by saying: "*I'm not a number; it's a relationship that I am grateful to have.*" In fact, when asked what keeps people coming back to LifeStore, 63.5% of respondents answered: "The employees at LifeStore know me."

Washburn adds, "We believe our desire to please local customers is the main factor that has contributed to our recent increases in both loans and deposits. Our loan portfolio grew \$14 million dollars and we are also pleased to have 5.0% growth in our deposits, with all of the growth coming in checking and savings accounts. In summary, we had solid trends in all the key metrics, in both banking and insurance services. In the coming year we will be adding several products that embrace technology and make it easier to do business with us."

*LifeStore Financial Group, headquartered in West Jefferson, provides banking, investment and insurance services. It is a federally chartered thrift holding company that owns 100% of the common stock of LifeStore Bank (Member FDIC and Equal Housing Lender) and operates branches in Boone, Jefferson, Warrentonville and West Jefferson. LifeStore Insurance is an independent insurance agency that serves these markets along with Elkin, Lenoir, North Wilkesboro and Sparta.*

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