

# PACKET & TIMES

## Letters to the editor

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Banker defends changes

Re: Banks have lost the personal touch (Jan. 18)

In a recent opinion piece, Doug Lewis claims Canada's banks have "abandoned their community responsibilities." In fact, banks are very active in their communities and work hard to meet the needs of all of their clients.

Banking has changed, customer needs have evolved and bank branches have also changed to adapt to customer preferences. A 2010 study showed nearly half (45%) of Canadians now do most of their banking online, up from only 8% in 2000, while only 23% now do their day-to-day banking in a branch.

Because customer preferences have shifted, branches have changed to help meet the needs of their clients, such as saving, investing and borrowing. Banks are also continuously looking to improve their retail branches; some banks are open Saturdays and even Sundays, staying open longer and installing more ABMs. Others offer multilingual services and provide more comfortable seating in their branches and the latest technology for customers to use.

Furthermore, banks are also involved in their community, supporting local charities, community groups and sports teams, both through direct donations and with employees volunteering their time. The Canadian Bankers Association has several Orillia-area bankers volunteering their time to conduct Your Money seminars, free, non-commercial financial literacy seminars for senior high school students, teaching them about credit, savings, fraud and more ( [www.yourmoney.cba.ca](http://www.yourmoney.cba.ca)).

Since its inception, Your Money has held seminars for more than 205,000 students across Canada, all taught by volunteer bankers.

Mr. Lewis is correct when he states the Canadian banking system is admired worldwide in the financial industry. Canadian banks have been ranked No. 1 for the most sound banking system in world for four years in a row by the World Economic Forum.

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