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Editor
AARP The Magazine
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Washington, DC 20049

Dear Editor:

I'd hate to see *AARP The Magazine* miss out on making readers aware that community banks, which are as different from the Wall Street megabanks as you can get, are also a great place for consumers to consider when they move their money.

In "The Little Banks That Can" (July/August) Lynn Brenner focuses on credit unions but all three reasons that she lists—lower fees, higher interest and personal service—are the hallmark of community banking. After all, it's part of the community bank business model. Because community bankers live and work where their customers do, if they didn't do right by their customers, they'd never be able to keep their doors open. More than that, community banks are often engaged and involved in the cultural and civic life of their communities, whether it's sponsoring a little league team, hosting a charitable event or sponsoring retirement planning seminars. And unlike credit unions, community banks pay taxes that go toward supporting critical community services.

It's important to remember that community banks "emerged relatively unscathed from the subprime mortgage meltdown." Thanks to their common sense lending, they have continued to be good and prudent stewards of their customers' money. All community bank deposits are insured by the FDIC, based on legal limits. Community banks may have a wider range of services than credit unions. And community banks have continued to be the biggest lenders to small business owners across the country.

Plus, there's no membership requirement. No affinity group to join. These are just some of the reasons why the nation's nearly 8,000 community banks continue to gain customers seeking refuge from the megabanks that caused the economic crisis.

To find a local community bank, visit ICBA's Community Bank Locator, (<http://www.icba.org/consumer/BankLocator.cfm?sn.ItemNumber=51757>). And to learn more about community banks, go to www.ICBA.org.

Sincerely,

Karen Tyson
Senior Vice President/Communications
Independent Community Bankers of America