

COMMUNITY

No change

Abundance of \$20 bills leaves area businesses shortchanged

BY CECILIA NASMITH
STAFF WRITER

From drive-throughs to dollars stores, they're singing the \$20 blues.

The convenience of today's automated bank machines is unbeatable. But those \$20 bills they spew out definitely aren't a convenience at those places where you try to spend them.

As people turn more to cash machines, their wallets seem to carry nothing but \$20 bills. And when these are used for small purchases, an establishment's supply of change quickly evaporates — like at the Cobourg Public Library where Ann Stokes often receives twenties to pay for things like 50-cent videotape-insurance fees and 15-cent photocopying charges.

"Late in the day we can manage, but first thing in the morning it clears us out of all our change," Mrs. Stokes said.

She noticed a couple of years ago that the circulation desk constantly seemed to be running out of change. She noticed, at about the same time, that bank machines only gave out money in multiples of \$20. Coincidence? She thinks not.

When Trish Stewart sees a customer approaching her at Crazy Burger, she knows the odds are greater than 50-50 that she is



vices such as money orders.

"Sometimes the \$10 and \$5 bills are scarce," she said.

Mrs. Stokes admits the shoe is often on the other foot. Many times she finds herself in the Dutch Oven with a \$2.10 bill for her muffin and coffee and a twenty in her wallet.

But then, she said, that is because the bank machines give customers no choice — they must take out an amount that is a multiple of \$20.

"I think what people like from the good old days is the personal touch — the milk man, the bread man, the mail man, even the garbage man," Mrs. Stokes reminisced.

"It used to be, if the garbage man dropped something, he picked it up. Now it's just left sitting there.

"The thing that made the good old days good is the personal involvement, and that's what we are missing."

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