

# PBA SPOTLIGHT

## MetroBank an integral part of Village community



Charles Brier,  
MetroBank  
president and CEO

**BY LINDA RODRIGUEZ BERNFELD**

When Norm would enter the bar in the TV series Cheers, everyone would call out his name in greeting. Cheers was the place where everyone knew your name.

In banking, everyone would like their bank officers to know their name and not just their customer number. But, as consolidation in the industry continues and banks get bigger, the chances for personal banking are diminishing, especially in South Florida. That's because Florida is a hotbed for the banking industry, with the huge national banks establishing a presence here.

"The perception of the rest of the country is that it's very opportune to have a bank in Florida," says Charles Brier, president and chief operating officer of MetroBank, a Pinecrest-based local bank. "The major banking companies are seeking markets that have major growth potential."

However, MetroBank is a place where everybody knows your name. In fact, after the hurricanes last year, MetroBank called all of its better customers to find out if they had weathered the storm without problems.

"We asked them what they needed, if there was any service we could provide," Brier says.

Hurricane Wilma hit on Monday and those calls were being made by Wednesday. In fact, all the branches on South Dixie Highway opened on Wednesday.

"Some branches were with limited power, so we closed the drive-in and we had the people come into the lobby on a one-on-one basis," Brier says, adding that the bank was well prepared for the hurricanes that hit last year and will be

even better prepared this year.

MetroBank's company headquarters at a 9350 S. Dixie Hwy. There are three Metro bank locations on South Dixie Highway and one on Southwest 137th Avenue, just south of Kendall Drive. There are two more branches located in Broward County.

Brier says the bank prides itself on good customer service. One aspect of that is employee retention.

"When you need a loan, being able to talk to the same person this year that you did last year (is valuable) so you don't have to establish yourself all over again," Brier says.

Also, when a loan might be difficult to make, a local bank such as MetroBank is more likely to take a risk than a bank that doesn't know the customer personally.

"The first thing we ask, is how long has the account been with us and what's their track record," he says.

Another good thing about a bank such as MetroBank is the fact that you can call on the phone and get a live person to answer your questions. Brier says people don't want to have to call an 800 number and get shifted around 18 times.

"It's just a frustrating experience," he says.

MetroBank offers a complete line of banking services. It also offers full automated services for those who prefer online Internet banking.

"We pride ourselves in the way we deal with commercial customers," Brier says.

MetroBank has a wide range of customer loans and equity lines of credit.

"We do a lot of commercial real estate loans," Brier says.

For more information, call 305-670-0200 or visit <[www.MetroBankfl.com](http://www.MetroBankfl.com)>.