

For Immediate Release:

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Charleston, Illinois: As a community bank, Peoples Bank & Trust recognizes the value of volunteerism in our communities. To recognize, commend and promote volunteerism, Peoples Bank & Trust has established a program to recognize outstanding community volunteers who personally exhibit outstanding volunteerism and promote the improvement of our communities.

Patricia Mahler of Charleston has been chosen as Peoples Bank & Trust's Volunteer of the Quarter. She is well known in the community for her talents as an artist and enjoys sharing her passion with artists of all ages. She has been labeled "long time art teacher" but she is much more. Pat began her teaching career as an Art Teacher in Milwaukee, WI and taught Art in several schools before her retirement from Jefferson Elementary School in Charleston in 1994. She came out of retirement more than once to serve local schools through Arts-in-Education Residencies and has mentored many artists in Coles County and the State of Illinois.

Pat was a founding member and first President of the Coles County Arts Council in 1984 and has been a member for 31 years. She was also a charter member of the Tourism Advisory Board for the City of Charleston, served as Guest Curator International Exhibition of Children's Art at the Tarble Arts Center, established Help an Art Program Foundation and has provided Art Teacher Mentoring in her retirement with teachers in Charleston, Mattoon and Oakland schools. Pat has volunteered her talents at many workshops in Coles County and is looking forward to a day trip, sponsored by the Coles County Arts Council, to Pumpkin Glass in Peoria for a Bead Workshop in the fall. She has also been a member of the Illinois Arts Council, Arts-In-Education Program, Illinois Artisan Program and was awarded the first Outstanding Service Award by the Eastern Illinois University Art Department. Pat extended her volunteering in 2006 as Curator of the Art Auction to raise money for the Pancreatic Cancer Benefit, Fish for the Cure, in Lake Forest, Illinois.

In honor of Pat's volunteer services, Peoples Bank & Trust has made a donation to Coles County Arts Council, Fiber Arts Division. Her name has been placed on a plaque which is displayed in the bank's lobby.

Peoples Bank & Trust is an independent Community Bank with ten offices located in Pana, Taylorville, Altamont, Charleston, Tower Hill, Springfield, Morrisonville, Palmyra, Waverly and White Hall. Peoples Bank & Trust is a full-service bank offering outstanding customer service to consumers, small business, and farmers in Central Illinois. People First Bancshares, Inc., with corporate offices in Pana, Illinois, is the holding company for Peoples Bank & Trust.

