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.

The Charleston Area Chamber of Commerce has been chosen as Peoples Bank & Trust's most recent Volunteer of the Quarter.   The Charleston Chamber of Commerce was founded in 1919 and officially signed the Articles of Incorporation on June 28, 1920. The name was changed to Charleston *Area* Chamber of Commerce on December 28, 1971. Cindy White has worked at the Chamber office since 1996 and has served as President and CEO for nearly 20 years. The current Chamber staff includes two full-time employees and an active Board of Directors made up of 18 representatives from the business community.

The Chamber office works very hard to promote businesses and events, celebrate member accomplishments, and stay updated on government affairs, economic development and ways to enrich the Charleston area. They have just completed their 2018 Membership Directory & Buyers Guide which is a great resource to their membership and the community.

Year 2017 proved to be a busy year of events beginning with the Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony in January which recognized the Chamber Diplomat of the Year, the Small Business of the Year and the Outstanding Citizen of the Year. Other events included What Women Want, the Legislative Update Lunch, two Community Update Breakfasts co-hosted with the Mattoon Chamber and the inaugural event in 2017 -- the Tour de Charleston Bike Race which was very successful. In 2018 the Chamber has a full yearly schedule of Business After Hours events which offer members valuable networking opportunities. They will also sponsor some Business Before Hours, arrange Member Spotlight tours and work in collaboration with the Mattoon Chamber of Commerce to host Joint Business After Hours.

Annually they offer Lessons over Lunch, workshops and seminars for members, and promote the BUY Local program and Small Business Saturday campaign. The Chamber staff and Board Members attend many community events, open houses, ribbon cuttings and groundbreaking events each year and work hard for the betterment of the Charleston area.

The Chamber provides benefits and services to a diverse membership of over 250 members. All of their employees are also considered Chamber members so thousands of individuals in the Charleston area have a connection to the Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber works hard to communicate with its membership and the community at large. Cindy White writes a newspaper column for the Journal Gazette-Times Courier. Events and updates are promoted in the monthly newsletter, with press releases, radio spots, television ads, regular announcements with Constant Contact, and via social media. Members receive the Wednesday Updates in their email each Wednesday with news and updates. The Chamber also has a website, is on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Linked-In.   Check them out at www.charlestonchamber.com.

Peoples Bank and Trust is honoring the Charleston Area Chamber of Commerce with a contribution to the Chamber and has placed their name on a plaque which is displayed in the bank's lobby. The Charleston Area Chamber of Commerce is the 30th volunteer recognized by Peoples Bank and Trust.

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 businesses and farmers in Central Illinois. People First Bancshares, Inc., with corporate offices in Pana, Illinois, is the holding company for Peoples Bank & Trust.