

For Immediate Release

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

Titan Fuel in Chatham was selected as the Springfield/ Chatham Branch Volunteer of the Quarter. Community Bank President, Dave Kromphardt, presented the Peoples Bank & Trust donation at their November Board meeting.

Titan Fuel was developed in response to changing demographics within the Ball-Chatham School District. The District has seen steady increases in the number of low-income families over the last several years – going from 5.9% in 2000 to nearly 23% now. Thanks to an initial grant secured by the Chatham United Methodist Women in 2015-16, the District was able to assist elementary school families who were struggling to provide enough food on a consistent basis. It was always the intent of the Titan Fuel steering committee to grow the program to include all grade levels, and, thanks to generous donations and the support of our community, the program has expanded to all schools in the Ball-Chatham District.

Backpacks filled with food are provided to children as they leave school on Fridays to provide nutritious food throughout the weekend. Volunteer groups and individuals gather at donated space at Beads and More, a Chatham retail store, on Wednesday evenings to pack the bags. Food and cash donations are used to provide the items included in the backpacks.

The distribution program has grown steadily since it began in the grade school level in 2015. Support for it has grown as well through the efforts of its Steering Committee and other members of the community. Its main fundraising effort is a Shrimp Boil held in June each year, but relationships have been established with community businesses and organizations as well.

Titan Fuel has a Steering Committee of eleven members plus a representative of the School District. The head of the Steering Committee is Meredith Ferguson, owner of Ferguson Financial in Chatham. She has credited the growth of the program to the recognition of the need by the community and its willingness to provide a way to improve the lives of its children.

In honor of the Titan Fuel's voluntary services, a donation has been made to their cause. Peoples Bank & Trust is planning to provide volunteer time to this program in

addition to the donation. Titan Fuel's name will be placed on a plaque displayed at the bank

Peoples Bank & Trust is an independent Community Bank with ten offices located in Pana, Taylorville, Altamont, Charleston, Morrisonville, Waverly, White Hall, Palmyra, Tower Hill and Springfield. Peoples 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.