

For Immediate Release:

For Additional Information Contact: Kathleen Anderson, AVP, Consumer Banking  
Phone: (888) 728-1954

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.

Standing Stone Community Center of Charleston has been chosen as Peoples Bank & Trust's Volunteer of the Quarter. Dawn Thomson is the Executive Director of Standing Stone Community Center, a nonprofit Christian ministry which provides food, clothing and furniture to all who pass through its doors. Nearly 5 ½ years ago, Dawn, who has a Master's Degree in Plant and Soil Science, had been unemployed for nearly a year and was concerned about her future. She and a friend sat down and watched the movie "The Touch". The movie inspired Dawn to open a Community Center to help those in need and it changed her life.

She did a lot of research to determine the community's needs, purchased an old warehouse on Sixth Street and applied to have Standing Stone become a nonprofit, which is no easy feat. Dawn says, "Writing my thesis was easier than filling out that nonprofit form". Her hard work paid off and Standing Stone obtained the nonprofit status. After nine months of renovating the warehouse, she was able to open Standing Stone Community Center. She started a program which allows people to come in and receive up to five items of clothing, free of charge, each month. Dawn says nearly everything in the store is donated. In August 2015 Dawn started a branch of the Community Center called "Carpenters Table", located just a few blocks away on 14<sup>th</sup> Street. At Carpenters Table, nice, low-cost furniture can be purchased and there is also a food pantry for those in need. Standing Stone Community Center and Carpenters Table help about 6,000 people each year.

Dawn Thomson and many volunteers work at Standing Stone Community Center and Carpenters Table to help those in our community. Peoples Bank and Trust is honoring them with a donation to Standing Stone Community Center and has placed its name 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 businesses and farmers in Central Illinois. People First Bancshares, Inc., with corporate offices in Pana, Illinois, is the holding company for Peoples Bank & Trust.