

For Immediate Release:

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Pana, 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 outstanding community members for their volunteer efforts of improvement to our community.

Peoples Bank & Trust is proud to recognize The Quilter's Group at the United in Faith Church as its current Volunteers of the Quarter.

The Quilters are in their 20th year of making and donating quilts to various organizations. During the past year, they made 43 quilts including 11 nursing home quilts, 22 quilts for kids who are transitioning through Pana Community Hospital and 5 BIG twin size quilts for Kemmerer Village. All these quilts have been donated to people who need some comfort or a big hug.

In 2000, Pastor Marilyn Rauch, minister at the Presbyterian Church, encouraged the congregation to share their talents. Linda Parkinson asked if she could teach the women in the church how to make quilts and they were off and running. Several quilts were made for various family members and Linda was happy with that. But, then God said, "I think you could give these quilts to folks who need a little comforting." From that time on all of their quilts have been donated. They call this "Our Quilt Ministry". They soon added members from other churches who were interested in helping and they brought along their friends. The Group currently has twelve members: Louise Shippy-Rouse, Linda Parkinson, Deb Pastor, Shirley Buescher, Kate Schloz, Claudia Oller, Gaile Gardner, Jan McMillen, Chris Ober, Deb Warren, Teresa Vail Suter and Martha Rosenberger.

Linda said the group started out with nothing, but slowly accumulated some fabric, thread, tools and ironing boards. We kept stuff in the furnace room and a spare Sunday school room. When the Presbyterian Church joined with St. John's UCC, to become United in Faith Church, and built their new building; the building committee and especially Bob Horstemke made sure they had a space for supplies. The Metzger family donated shelving as well. By that time, they also had helpers with the quilting part. Christi Pallow from Clinton and Joe Flier from Mahomet did several as well as Joyce Dullenty from the Christian County Quilters Guild and Tammy Pfifer. Brenda Gelsinger, owner of the Fabric Patch, has quilted numerous times for them. The Gelsinger's have also been generous with donations of fabric, batting and the use of their longarm quilting machines. Linda also noted that their own member, Kate Schloz, has quilted so very many of their quilts! Sometimes when the group gets together, they find surprises waiting for them as someone has cleaned out a sewing room and brought them boxes of supplies. They also have two members, who wish to be anonymous, who have helped with monetary donations for fabric and other supplies. They are very grateful.

The group meets every Monday evening from 5:30 -9:00 during the school year. In addition to the comfort quilts for kids at PCH and Kemmerer Village, they have made quilts for wounded Soldiers and the Church's Veterans, for area nursing homes and fundraisers, hurricane victims and Shadow House residents, Pana Fire and Police Departments, and quilting friends that are ill or have moved away. This year they are also making receiving blankets for Loving Arms and hundreds of masks.

Since 2000, the group has made and donated over one thousand quilts. They love doing this and they would love to have anyone join them. They will teach you and feed you! Linda shared a quote that she felt was appropriate, "Doesn't everyone desire to leave a mark, to make a difference? In truth mortality has been one of mankind's devouring disappointments, having only a brief time to make a difference, one forever feels the pressure to get cracking. I think we have made a difference."

Peoples Bank and Trust is honoring the United in Faith Quilters Group with a donation and have placed their 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, Tower Hill, Charleston, Springfield, Morrisonville, Palmyra, Waverly and White Hall. 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.