

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 Marsha Hunter as its current Volunteer of the Quarter. Marsha is the Chairperson for the Tower Hill Lions Club Angel Tree and Food Basket program.

The Tower Hill Lions Club took over providing the Angel Tree and Food Baskets in 2010 from the Tower Hill Lioness Club. The process works to provide Christmas gifts through the Angel Tree to those children in the Tower Hill area (as defined by the zip code 62571) who otherwise would not have a Christmas celebration. In addition to the Angel Tree gifts provided by the people who take the tag off the tree and buy for a child, the Lions Club also accepts donated gifts of new toys from various sources including those donated at the annual Lions Club Toy and Tool Sale the Saturday prior to Thanksgiving and distributes them as well. The Lions Club also requests monetary donations from local churches and businesses to assist in this project.

In addition to the gifts, each family on the Angel Tree and those families who have signed up without need of Christmas gifts is provided with a generous food basket. It includes items for a full dinner for the holiday and enough food, including meat, to feed the family for the time the students would normally be out of school for the holiday vacation. The Lions Club works with Sav-A-Lot for food items and Tri-County Feed and Seed for the holiday hams for Christmas dinner.

Thanks to the input from Washington and Lincoln schools, a baseline of those who may need help is utilized and all are notified of the process and how to apply. In addition, a general sign up day is posted in the community for those who have not been notified or have children who are no longer eligible for the Angel Tree (those over 12 years old). Those persons in the community who know of a family in need who may not have applied can contact Marsha Hunter, Chairperson at 778-4103 for information on how to get them the help needed.

Casey's in Tower Hill graciously hosts the Angel Tree and assists in getting the tags out and gifts back as a central location. Through the efforts of their staff, they make sure all the tags are filled with gifts and back for pick up at the Lions Club, usually the Saturday before Christmas. The Lions Club members come together to pack the bags of presents and the food baskets for each family. They then assist in loading it into the car for the recipients or, if necessary, may deliver it.

This Christmas we will be helping by providing 32 children with gifts through the Angel Tree and 17 families with food baskets. Our average number of families is 20 with average number of kids on the Angel Tree being 37.

Peoples Bank and Trust is honoring Marsha and the Tower Hill Lions Club with a donation to the Angel Tree program and have placed her 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.