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Committed to the Community: Peoples Bank provides guidance and assistance to local businesses

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Tony V. Martin

Hammond- (L to R) Marty Hollingshead of Northlake Auto recyclers and Dan Magura from Peoples Bank.

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In This Issue

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When it comes to putting money to work, growing the businesses that drive local economies, local decision-making is often a lifeline of financial support for small businesses.

Whether you are starting a business, launching a new product or service, expanding to a new location or acquiring another company, locally owned and managed community banks have a wide range of products and services to meet your needs.

At some point, most entrepreneurs will need to acquire a loan in order to get their business off the ground and keep it going strong. That's why it's so important to develop a long-term relationship with your bank, carefully considering what you need immediately, as well as any additional services you may require in the years to come. You also want to find a banker who will take the time and make the effort to really understand your business and your industry, not just your creditworthiness and borrowing needs.

After years of dealing with the same banker, even when he changed locations, Marty Hollingshead, owner and operator of Northlake Auto Recyclers in Hammond for the past 30 years, made the decision to switch to a local bank when his trusted advisor retired.

"I tried a few local banks and was happy with my former bank until they sold out to a larger bank," he said. "I'm loyal to somebody I have a relationship with, but quite honestly, I don't think I was a big enough customer for them."

Knowing full well that switching banks can be a hassle, Hollingshead decided it was time to make another move.

"I interviewed three different banks at that point," he explained. "Peoples Bank was the one I felt most comfortable with. It's a larger community bank that's been around for a while, and I thought it was the best fit, the best option for the relationship I wanted. I don't want to have to earn my stripes every two or three years, I want to be able to pick up the phone and call them if I have a question."

Hollingshead has found that everyone at Peoples Bank - from the branch employees to Business Bankers Dan Magura and Brian Rusin - is willing to devote their time to meeting the needs of a single business owner.

"We're real comfortable with each other," he said. "The loan department is excellent, and the trust department manages profit sharing for me. My employees and I find the branches always provide really good service for us."

According to small business advisors, financing options - loans or credit lines - should be a top consideration when selecting a bank. Independent community banks know local market conditions, and they often provide one-on-one access to a loan officer who can put more emphasis on a borrower's character rather than just applying a credit-score model.

"In my experience, bigger banks tend to crunch the numbers and follow very rigid decision-making parameters," Peoples Bank Vice President Dan Magura said. "Community banks have the ability to look at the big picture."

"I was looking at a deal to purchase another building recently," Hollingshead added. "I gave them a call and explained all the details. It only took half an hour for them to call back and say go for it. They know the area, and I've educated them on my business. There are a lot of moving parts - technology and science - that go along with operating this business properly. We are not a junkyard. We are the premier recycler serving customers within a 50-mile radius by choice. It's a huge market with great potential. I want to know my customer, so this is my comfort zone."



Northlake Auto Recyclers process approximately 1,800 vehicles annually, operating from a 60,000-sq-ft warehouse and indoor parts storage facility with an additional 80,000-sq-ft of covered outdoor storage in a private 18-acre yard.

“We operate professionally and provide a good product – on time and as described,” Hollingshead said. “That’s a fact, something we do here day in and day out. I’m an old-school guy. Everything is done on merit. Decisions need to be made, and they need to be made in short order. Peoples Bank has enabled me to do things I wouldn’t have been able to do without their partnership.”

“Marty cares for his employees, and the people he does business with,” Magura added. “He can grow to be a very big and successful company at any time – but the priority is always on the quality product and the quality of service. We want to see him grow too. We’re a good fit for each other. His objective is to gain more market share and more customers while still providing the great products and services that fit their needs.”

In addition to lending, Business Banking at Peoples Bank covers a wide range of services, including checking accounts, remote deposit capture, Certificates of Deposit, eBanking, cash management, card services and savings accounts. Plus, Peoples’ experienced team of Wealth Management specialists are always available to discuss how you can grow and safeguard your assets with investment, insurance, retirement and trust services.

Two leading providers of financial data for the banking and financial services industry named Peoples Bank – along with parent company Northwest Indiana Bancorp – a high performance bank.

For the seventh consecutive year, American Banker magazine recognized Peoples Bank as one of the nation’s Top 200 Community Banks for performance in its May 2013 issue. The leading information resource serving the banking and financial services community, American Banker ranked community banks with less than \$2 billion in assets at December 31, 2012 by their three-year average return on equity (ROE).

Peoples Bank was one of only 11 most profitable banks in Indiana to achieve distinction among 851 community banks across the country who fit the criteria.

Also this year, SNL Financial, a leading national provider of financial data and expert analysis on the banking industry, ranked Peoples Bank one of the nation’s Top 100 Public Thrifts of 2012. SNL’s ranking is based on six financial metrics for the 12 months ended December 31, 2012 that focus on profitability, asset quality and growth.

Peoples Bank is one of only six Indiana banks to make the Top 100 list.

“If I were to ever run into difficulties, I feel they would stand by me,” Hollingshead said. “They are smart about what they do, and they do a great job!”

Headquartered in Munster, Peoples Bank currently has offices in Crown Point, Dyer, East Chicago, Gary, Hammond, Hobart, Merrillville, St. John, Schererville and Valparaiso. Look for more information on the bank’s products, services and investor relations at ibankpeoples.com.

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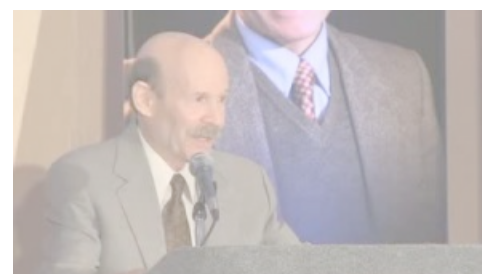
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Do you know of any good candidates for this year’s class of emerging NWI leaders?

Typically honorees have distinguished themselves professionally and have been recognized for working in the community on some type of service project as well. Emails supporting that person are welcomed. The deadline for nominations is August 1.

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