



In Good Taste

with Alison Henderson

First National Bank celebrates 110 years of community

The first thing I noticed when I walked into the lobby of the First National Bank Hartford branch was the smell of fresh, buttery popcorn and the machine that was popping it for all visitors. The second thing I noticed, as I waited to meet with the independent community bank's president and CEO, Tim Purman, was an interaction between a teller and a customer.

"OK, you have a good day now, and don't forget to grab some popcorn on the way out!" the teller shouted jovially to her departing customer, calling her by name.

It's like they've been friends for years, I thought to myself.

It turns out the popcorn was a special treat to help

First National Bank celebrate April as Community Banking Month; they've also offered cookies and ice cream.

While free treats are a great addition to any event, Community Banking Month is much more than that.

Purman, who has worked at First National Bank for more than 30 years, said the month-long celebration gives them the chance to recognize what community banking offers to individuals and the community.

He said the value of community banking is that decisions, like a request for a home or business loan, are made locally and the money they bring in is returned to the local economy. With three branches, in Hartford, Slinger and

Richfield, Purman said this means "you can trust that your money is being redistributed back into (those) areas in the form of loans to fellow residents and entrepreneurs."

He said the other value is that it creates a circle of commitment and giving.

"The employees live in the community, we are part of the community and we are here to serve. We have a strong desire to help customers at a high level. We all have the same goals," he said. "We pride ourselves on building relationships with our customers, we get to know our customers by name."

(Noted! I thought.)

As soon as Community Banking Month wraps up, the Washington County-area institution will take a moment to honor a special



President and CEO Tim Purman, left, and some of the staff from First National Bank's Hartford Branch gather in the lobby on Popcorn Day, one of the bank's many free events during Community Banking Month.

milestone. In May of 1907, First National Bank opened its doors in Hartford with a capital of \$50,000. So, as the bank approaches its 110th anniversary – now with approximately 300 shareholders, 55 employees, a nine-member Board of Directors, three branches and a capital of \$22.9 million – they will also enjoy being part of a rare statistic: according to the Independent Community Bankers association, only 5 percent of community banks have been in business for more than a century.

In that time, First National has demonstrated its vested interest in the community and seeing the community grow. Recently, it has been a part of projects like the restoration of Chandelier Ballroom, the Jack Russell Memorial Library and the Washington

County Fairgrounds through capital contributions and staff volunteer time. The bank and its staff are also involved with the Hartford Business Improvement District, the Chamber of Commerce and Relay for Life.

"While we certainly have grown and changed over the last 110 years ... what hasn't changed is what you can expect from us. Simplicity, stability and loyalty," Purman said in a letter. "We are eternally grateful to the community members, customers, staff and shareholders who have supported us. We wouldn't be here without all of you. We're looking forward to the next 110."

The 110th anniversary will be celebrated this summer with events including a community block party June 21, featuring live music, food and more

details to follow.

You can visit the First National Bank of Hartford Facebook page to keep up with festivities. For example, when I stopped by, I found out that they are giving away MasterCard gift cards during Community Banking Month in honor of their 110th anniversary. You can also visit the website at www.fnb-hartford.com for more information about services, benefits of community banking and a full calendar of events.

This recipe for Strawberry Cream Cheese Ice Box Cake comes from Jeanette Weber, a former teller who worked at the Hartford branch for 35 years until she retired in 2010. Weber's recipe just appeared in First National Bank's 2017 spring/summer newsletter. She said she loved

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working at First National Bank and considered customers "like family."

Strawberry Cream Cheese Ice Box Cake

Ingredients:

2 lbs strawberries
2 sleeves graham crackers
1 8 oz package cream cheese (room temperature)
1 14 oz can sweetened condensed milk
23.4 oz packages of instant cheesecake-flavored pudding
3 cups milk
1 12 oz container whipped topping

Directions:

Wash strawberries, cut tops off and slice. Set aside.

Line the bottom of a 13x9 baking dish with graham crackers. The pan should fit about 6 whole crackers and a seventh can be broken up to fill in the rest of the space.

In Good Taste

Combine the cream cheese and sweetened condensed milk in a large bowl and beat with a mixer until smooth and creamy.

Add the pudding and milk and mix on low for 4-5 minutes until the mixture thickens.

Fold in two cups of whipped topping until smooth.

Pour half of the cream cheese mixture over the graham crackers.

Arrange a single layer of strawberries over the cream cheese mixture.

Top strawberries with another layer of whole graham crackers to fit the pan and then cover with the remaining cream cheese mixture.

Top cream cheese mixture with more berries. Chill for 6 to 8 hours.

When ready to serve, cover with remaining whipped topping.

Crush remaining graham crackers and sprinkle

crumbs over whipped topping.

Garnish with any remaining berries if you desire.

Upcoming First National Bank events:

April 21: Coffee bar with coffee or hot chocolate until 3 p.m. at FNB

April 22 to 29: Receive a free RFID wallet during Money Smart Week until supplies last

April 28: Frozen yogurt treats 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. or while supplies last

April 29: Shred Fest at FNB Hartford branch, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

All month of April: Receive a bulb plant and RFID debit or credit card sleeve while supplies last

May 5: Cinco de Mayo walking tacos, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. or while supplies last

June 21: 110th Anniversary Community Block Party, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.



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