



721 West Jackson Street, Morton, IL 61550
(309) 266-5337
www.hometownbanks.com

NEWS RELEASE
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FIRST TRUST & SAVINGS BANK OF ALBANY TO MERGE INTO MORTON COMMUNITY BANK

First Trust & Savings Bank of Albany, Illinois will merge into Morton Community Bank in the fourth quarter of 2019, adding four locations to the footprint of Morton Community Bank and bringing the total assets of the employee-owned community bank to approximately \$4.0 billion.

Mark Hanson, President of First Trust, said the merger will be a step forward for First Trust customers and employees. "We are excited about the opportunities that come with Morton's family-style culture and entrepreneurial spirit. This partnership will allow us to continue to deliver a community bank experience, while also introducing more competitive mortgage options, business lending capabilities, cash management tools, and trust and wealth management solutions," he said.

Officials from both banks say the merger will benefit the communities of Albany, Erie, Hillsdale, and Port Byron, as well as the entire Quad Cities metropolitan area.

"We are excited about the future of community banking in these First Trust communities," said Andy Honegger, President and Co-CEO of Morton Community Bank. "A partnership like this will bring additional opportunities to the region as local businesses and residents tap into our expanded banking services and expertise. Our Bank maintains a deep commitment to rural communities in Illinois, and we look forward to serving the residents and ag producers of Whiteside, Rock Island, and Henry Counties."

The four First Trust locations will be rebranded as Clock Tower Community Bank, which will operate as a division of Morton Community Bank. Morton Community Bank operates on the web under the umbrella name of Hometown Community Banks.

The merger with Morton also comes with an additional benefit for First Trust employees. "Morton Community Bank is an employee-owned bank, so employees of First Trust will have the unique opportunity to become owners of the bank," said Honegger. "We like to say that our employees serve customers like bank owners...because they are bank owners!"

In 2017, Morton Community Bank merged with State Bank of Arthur and in 2018 the Bank also acquired State Bank of Speer. The Bank has grown steadily since being established in Morton, Illinois in 1960 and today it employs nearly 500 Central Illinois residents. Corporate headquarters remains in Morton.

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MORTON COMMUNITY BANK CONTACT:
Andy Honegger
Co-CEO & President
309-266-5337

FIRST TRUST CONTACT:
Mark J. Hanson
President
309-514-2105