



**Blackhawk Bank Announces Record-Breaking Number of
Home Loans in First Quarter**

***Local Bank Contributes its Community Focus and Local Servicing
for Bucking National Home Loan Trend***

ROCKFORD, IL (April 29, 2008) – In what is recognized as the worst housing market in decades, Blackhawk Bank is showing a record-breaking number of home loans in the first quarter of 2008.

While many lending institutions are merging or closing up shop now that the subprime bubble has burst, Blackhawk Bank is showing a 121 percent increase in its home loans. This included closing 119 loans in February alone. To further distance itself from other lenders, Blackhawk Bank, which services its own loans, has also not seen the same foreclosure trouble.

Blackhawk's stability also allows the bank to keep control over the process with local underwriting and decision making. Blackhawk Bank and its representatives understand the ins and outs of the local market and can lend accordingly.

Blackhawk's role as a community bank has never varied. This commitment to the community has allowed Blackhawk to retain its current customers while meeting many new clients through referrals. Blackhawk's loan officers are best described as "trusted advisers" as opposed to "mortgage brokers."

"It's about the client-customer relationship," said Dave Adkins, Senior Vice President, Consumer Banking, Blackhawk Bank. "We focus on customers for the long term. We will take the time necessary to step up the process and ensure communications with the client always takes precedence."

Blackhawk operates seven banking centers in Beloit, WI; Roscoe, Machesney Park, Rockford, Belvidere and Capron, IL. A second Rockford banking center is slated to open in the fall of this year. For more information about the bank, log onto www.blackhawkbank.com.

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