

FIRST FARMERS & MERCHANTS CORP  
Form 10-K  
March 29, 2013

UNITED STATES

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

**FORM 10-K**

(Mark one)

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended **December 31, 2012**

or

TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the transition period from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Commission file number 000-10972

**First Farmers and Merchants Corporation**

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Tennessee  
(State or other jurisdiction of  
incorporation or organization)

62-1148660  
(I.R.S. Employer  
Identification No.)

816 South Garden Street

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Columbia, Tennessee 38402 1148  
(Address of principal executive offices) (Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code (931) 388-3145

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

| Title of each class | Name of each exchange on which registered |
|---------------------|---|
| None                | None                                      |

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act:

Common Stock, \$10.00 par value per share

(Title of class)

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.

Yes  No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act.

Yes  No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.

Yes  No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§ 232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files).

Yes  No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K (§ 229.405 of this chapter) is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer

Accelerated filer

Non-accelerated filer  (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)

Smaller reporting company

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Act).  Yes  No

The aggregate market value of the registrant's common stock held by non-affiliates as of June 30, 2012 was approximately \$122,483,400 based on the reported price at which the common stock was last sold in a transaction known to the registrant.



As of March 1, 2013, the registrant had outstanding 5,180,000 shares of common stock.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

Annual Report to Shareholders for Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2012 -- Part I and II of this Report.

Proxy Statement for 2013 Annual Shareholders Meeting to be held on April 16, 2013 -- Part III of this Report.

PART I

Item 1. Business.

**Description of Business**

First Farmers and Merchants Corporation (the Corporation) was incorporated on March 31, 1982 as a Tennessee corporation. As of December 31, 2012, the only direct subsidiary of the Corporation was First Farmers and Merchants Bank, a Tennessee state-chartered bank (the Bank). Management evaluates the financial condition of the Corporation in terms of the Bank's operations within its service area in Middle Tennessee.

The operations of the Bank are significantly affected by prevailing economic conditions, competition and the monetary, fiscal and regulatory policies of governmental agencies. Lending activities are influenced by the general credit needs of small businesses in the Bank's service area, competition among lenders, the level of interest rates and the availability of funds. The Bank's loan portfolio is comprised of commercial, commercial and residential real estate, and retail installment loans, which primarily originate within the Bank's service area. Deposits are the primary source of funds for the Bank. Such deposits consist of checking accounts, regular savings deposits, negotiable order of withdrawal accounts, money market accounts and market rate certificates of deposit. Deposits are solicited from individuals and businesses in the Bank's service area, state and local entities and, to a lesser extent, United States government entities and other depository institutions. Deposit flows and costs of funds are influenced by prevailing market rates of interest, primarily on competing investments, account maturities and the levels of personal income and savings in the Bank's service area. All of the Corporation's assets are located in the United States and all of its revenues generated from external customers originate within the United States.

The Bank's net income is dependent primarily on its net interest income, which is the difference between the interest income earned on its loans, investment assets and other interest-earning assets and the interest paid on deposits and other interest-bearing liabilities. To a lesser extent, the Bank's net income also is affected by its noninterest income derived principally from service fees as well as the level of noninterest expenses such as salaries and employee benefits.

For more information regarding the business of the Corporation and the Bank, please refer to Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, which is included in the Corporation's 2012 Annual Report to Shareholders (the Annual Report to Shareholders) attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference.

**Availability of SEC Reports**

The Corporation's website is [www.myfirstfarmers.com](http://www.myfirstfarmers.com). The Corporation makes available free of charge on this website under the About Us - Investor Services link the Corporation's annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K and amendments to those reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Exchange Act as soon as reasonably practicable after the Corporation electronically files such materials with, or furnishes them to, the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC). The SEC maintains a website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov) that also contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information about the Corporation that are available free of charge. In addition, copies of our reports are available, without charge, by making a request through the Contact Us link on our website.

**Regulation and Supervision**

In addition to the generally applicable state and federal laws governing businesses and employers, the Corporation is subject to extensive regulation by federal and state laws and regulations applicable to financial institutions and their parent companies. Nearly all aspects of the business of the Corporation are subject to specific requirements and restrictions and general regulatory oversight. The principal objectives of state and federal laws regulating financial institutions are the maintenance of the safety and soundness of the institutions and the federal deposit

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insurance system, and the protection of consumers or classes of consumers, rather than the specific protection of shareholders of a bank or the parent company of a bank, such as the Corporation. In addition, the supervision, regulation and examination of the Corporation by the bank regulatory agencies is not intended to protect the Corporation's shareholders. Below is a brief summary of the regulatory environment in which the Corporation and its subsidiaries operate, but it is not designed to be a complete discussion of all statutes and regulations affecting the Corporation or its subsidiaries.

The Corporation is a bank holding company regulated under the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 (the "BHCA") and is subject to regulation and supervision by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (the "Federal Reserve"). The Corporation is required to file various reports with, and is subject to examination by, the Federal Reserve. The Federal Reserve has the authority to issue orders to bank holding companies to cease and desist from unsound practices and violations of conditions imposed by, or violations of agreements with, the Federal Reserve. The Federal Reserve is also empowered to assess civil money penalties against companies or individuals who violate the BHCA or orders or regulations thereunder.

The Federal Reserve has the authority to prohibit bank holding companies from paying dividends if such payment is deemed to be an unsafe or unsound practice. The Federal Reserve has indicated generally that it may be an unsafe or unsound practice for bank holding companies to pay dividends unless a bank holding company's net income is sufficient to fund the dividends and the expected rate of earnings retention is consistent with the organization's capital needs, asset quality and overall financial condition. The Bank is also subject to regulatory limitations on the amount of dividends it may declare and pay. This may limit income available to the Corporation, as the Corporation depends in part upon dividends received from the Bank to fund its activities, including the payment of dividends.

According to Federal Reserve policy and the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Protection Act (the "Dodd-Frank Act") signed into law in July of 2010, a bank holding company is expected to act as a source of financial and managerial strength to each of its subsidiary banks and to commit resources to support each such subsidiary. This support may be required at times when the bank holding company may not have the resources to provide such support. Similarly, under the cross-guarantee provisions of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (the "FDIC") can hold any FDIC-insured depository institution liable for any loss suffered or anticipated by the FDIC in connection with (i) the default of a commonly controlled FDIC-insured depository institution or (ii) any assistance provided by the FDIC to a commonly controlled FDIC-insured depository institution in danger of default.

The Corporation owns the Bank, which is chartered under the laws of Tennessee and is a member of the Federal Reserve. The Bank is subject to extensive state regulation and examination by the Tennessee Department of Financial Institutions and the Federal Reserve as the primary regulators, and the FDIC as the secondary regulator that insures the deposits of all banks to the maximum extent permitted by law. The federal and state laws and regulations that are applicable to banks regulate, among other matters, the scope of the Bank's business, the Bank's investments, the Bank's reserves against deposits, the timing of the availability of deposited funds and the amount of loans and the amount of interest that may be charged on loans. Various state consumer laws and regulations also affect the Bank's operations.

The Corporation and the Bank are required to comply with capital guidelines issued by the Federal Reserve and with other tests related to capital adequacy that the Federal Reserve adopts from time to time.

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The Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (the Basel Committee ) has announced revised final frameworks, generally referred to as Basel III, for the regulation of capital and liquidity of internationally active banking organizations. Basel III would require capital to be held in the form of tangible common equity, generally increase the required capital ratios, phase out certain kinds of intangibles treated as capital and certain types of instruments, like trust preferred securities, and change the risk weightings of assets used to determine required capital ratios. Basel III is presently the subject of notices of proposed rulemaking released in June 2012 by federal banking agencies. The comment period for these notices of proposed rulemaking ended on October 22, 2012. Basel III was intended to be implemented in phases beginning January 1, 2013 and to be fully implemented on a global basis on January 1, 2019. On November 9, 2012, however, the federal banking agencies indefinitely delayed the January 1, 2013 implementation date.

The Federal Community Reinvestment Act (the CRA ) generally requires insured depository institutions to make loans and investments and provide services that meet the credit needs of the communities they serve. As a part of the CRA program, the Bank is subject to periodic examinations by the Federal Reserve and must maintain comprehensive records of its CRA activities. During these examinations, the Federal Reserve rates such institutions compliance with the CRA as Outstanding, Satisfactory, Needs to Improve or Substantial Noncompliance. As of the last CRA examination on September 12, 2012, the Bank received an Outstanding rating from the Federal Reserve.

Pursuant to the authority granted under various statutes, the federal bank regulatory agencies have adopted guidelines (the Guidelines ) for safekeeping confidential, personal customer information. The Guidelines require each financial institution, under the supervision and ongoing oversight of its board of directors or an appropriate committee thereof, to create, implement and maintain a comprehensive written information security program designed to ensure the security and confidentiality of customer information, protect against any anticipated threats or hazards to the security or integrity of such information and protect against unauthorized access to or use of such information that could result in substantial harm or inconvenience to any customer. The Bank has adopted a customer information security program that has been approved by the Board of Directors of both the Bank and the Corporation.

The Bank is required to pay quarterly FDIC deposit insurance assessments to the Deposit Insurance Fund ( DIF ). The FDIC maintains the DIF by assessing depository institutions an insurance premium. The amount each institution is assessed is based upon statutory factors that include the balance of insured deposits as well as the degree of risk the institution poses to the insurance fund. The FDIC uses a risk-based premium system that imposes insurance premiums based upon a risk matrix that takes into account a bank s capital level and supervision rating.

The passage of the Dodd-Frank Act brought about a major overhaul of the current financial institution regulatory system. Among other things, the Dodd-Frank Act established the independent Consumer Financial Protection Bureau tasked with protecting consumers from unfair, deceptive and abusive financial products and practices. The Dodd-Frank Act required the implementation of the Volcker Rule for banks and bank holding companies, which prohibits with certain limited exceptions, proprietary trading, investment in and sponsorship of hedge funds and private equity funds, and otherwise limit the relationships with such funds. The Dodd-Frank Act includes provisions that, among other things, reorganize bank supervision and strengthen the Federal Reserve. The Dodd-Frank Act also requires fees charged for debit card transactions, commonly referred to as interchange fees, to be both reasonable and proportional to the cost incurred by the card issuer.

Further, the Dodd-Frank Act provides that the appropriate federal regulators must establish standards prohibiting as an unsafe and unsound practice any compensation plan of a bank holding company or other covered financial institution that provides an insider or other employee with excessive compensation or could lead to a material financial loss to such firm. Prior to the implementation of the Dodd-Frank Act, the bank regulatory agencies promulgated the Interagency Guidance on Sound Incentive Compensation Policies, which requires that financial institutions establish metrics for measuring the impact of activities to achieve incentive compensation with the related risk of such behavior to the financial institution. The Dodd-Frank Act provides other restrictions, including limiting the ability of financial institutions to utilize trust preferred securities as Tier 1 capital going forward, and requiring institutions to retain credit risk when selling loans to third parties.

On July 31, 2010, the Federal Reserve implemented revised Regulation E. The effect of this revision was to allow customers of the Bank to opt out of overdraft protection programs, and thereby potentially reduce fee income generated by the Bank. The Bank has taken all steps

necessary to be compliant with the revised Regulation E.

The activities of the Corporation and the Bank are also subject to regulation under other various federal laws including the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act of 1999, the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001, the Truth-in-Lending Act, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the Fair Credit Reporting Act, the Fair Debt Collection Practice Act, the Electronic Funds Transfer Act and the Currency and Foreign Transactions Reporting Act, among others, as well as various state laws.

### **Competition**

The business of providing financial services is highly competitive. In addition to competing with other commercial banks in the Bank's service area, the Bank competes with savings and loan associations, insurance companies, savings banks, small loan companies, finance companies, mortgage companies, real estate investment trusts, certain governmental agencies, credit card organizations, credit unions and other enterprises. None of these competitors is dominant in the entire area served by the Bank.

In the Tennessee markets it serves, the Bank offers a typical mix of interest-bearing transaction, savings and time deposit products as well as traditional non-interest bearing deposit accounts. The Bank's primary market areas for these products are Dickson, Giles, Hickman, Lawrence, Marshall, Maury and Williamson Counties in Tennessee. The Bank also operates a loan production office in Florence (Lauderdale County), Alabama.

#### Employees

The Corporation has no employees. The Bank had approximately 244 full-time employees and 26 part-time employees at December 31, 2012. Four of the Bank's officers are also officers of the Corporation. Employee benefit programs provided by the Bank include a deferred profit-sharing plan, an annual profit-sharing plan, lender production incentives, a salary continuation plan, long-term disability insurance, a deferred compensation plan, an executive split-dollar life insurance plan, a post-retirement medical benefits program, a Section 125 cafeteria plan, training programs, group life and accidental death insurance, health and dental insurance and paid vacations.

#### Item 1A. Risk Factors.

An investment in our common stock involves significant risks. The risks and uncertainties that management believes affect or could affect us are described below. This listing should not be considered as all-inclusive. You should carefully read and consider these risks and uncertainties described below together with all of the other information included or incorporated by reference in this report before you decide to invest in our common stock. References to we, us, and our in this section refer to the Corporation and the Bank, unless otherwise specified or unless the context otherwise requires.

#### ***Our business and credit quality may be adversely affected by conditions in the financial market.***

Beginning in mid-2007, the financial services industry and the securities markets generally were materially and adversely affected by significant declines in the value of nearly all asset classes and by a serious lack of liquidity, and economic conditions affecting the banking industry have not since fully recovered. The global markets have been characterized by substantially increased volatility and short-selling and an overall loss of investor confidence.

Businesses continue to experience serious difficulties resulting from restrained consumer spending and the lack of credit market liquidity. Market conditions have also led to the failure or merger of a number of prominent financial institutions and competition for deposits and high quality loans has increased for those that remain in business.

Overall, during 2012 the business environment continued to be unfavorable for many households and businesses in the United States and worldwide. Although the business environment in middle Tennessee has been better than in the United States generally, our customers continue to be impacted by reduced asset values, a tightening credit environment, securities market volatility and other factors. It is possible that the business environment in middle Tennessee, the United States and worldwide will continue to experience weakness and uncertainty for the foreseeable future. There can be no assurance that conditions will improve in the near term. Such conditions could adversely affect the credit quality of our loans, results of operations and financial condition.

A reduction of customer deposits or an inability of our borrowers to repay loans could have a material adverse effect on our liquidity.

We rely on dividends from the Bank as our primary source of funds. The primary sources of funds of the Bank are customer deposits and loan repayments. While scheduled loan repayments are a relatively stable source of funds, they are subject to the ability of borrowers to repay the loans. The ability of borrowers to repay loans can be adversely affected by a number of factors, including changes in economic conditions, adverse trends or events affecting business industry groups, reductions in real estate values or markets, business closings or lay-offs, inclement weather, natural disasters and international instability. Additionally, deposit levels may be affected by a number of factors, including rates paid by competitors, general interest rate levels, returns available to customers on alternative investments and general economic conditions. Accordingly, we may be required from time to time to rely on secondary sources of liquidity, such as Federal Home Loan Bank advances, to

meet withdrawal demands or otherwise fund operations. While management believes that these sources are currently adequate, there can be no assurance they will be sufficient to meet future liquidity demands.

Our allowance for loan losses may be insufficient, which could result in a reduction of net income and capital.

We maintain an allowance for loan and lease losses, which is a reserve established through a provision for loan and lease losses charged to expense, that represents management's best estimate of probable losses that have been incurred within the existing portfolio of loans and leases. The allowance, in the judgment of management, is necessary to reserve for estimated loan losses and risks inherent in the loan portfolio. The level of the allowance reflects management's continuing evaluation of:

- portfolio quality trends;
- changes in the nature and volume of the portfolio;
- present and prospective economic and business conditions, locally and nationally;
- management review systems and board oversight;
- changes in credit policy, credit administration, portfolio management and procedures;
- changes in personnel, management and staff; and
- the existence and effect of any concentrations of credit.

The determination of the appropriate level of the allowance for loan and lease losses inherently involves a high degree of subjectivity and requires us to make significant estimates of current credit risks using existing qualitative and quantitative information, all of which may undergo material changes. An increase in the allowance for loan and lease losses results in a decrease in net income, and possibly capital, and may have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. For further discussion related to our allowance for loan and lease losses, please refer to [Liquidity and Capital Resources](#), [Loans and Loan Quality](#) and [Critical Accounting Policies](#), [Allowance for Loan and Lease Losses](#) in Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, which is included in the Annual Report to Shareholders attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference.

Our profitability depends significantly on economic conditions in the communities in the States of Tennessee and Alabama where we do business.

Our success and profitability depend on the general economic conditions in the specific local markets in middle Tennessee and northern Alabama where we do business. Local economic conditions have a significant impact on the demand for our products and services as well as the ability of our customers to repay loans, the value of the collateral securing loans and the stability of our deposit funding sources. A favorable business environment is generally characterized by, among other factors, economic growth, efficient capital markets, low inflation, high business and investor confidence, and strong business earnings. Unfavorable or uncertain economic and market conditions can be caused by: declines in economic growth, business activity or investor or business confidence; limitations on the availability or increases in the cost of credit and capital; increases in inflation or interest rates; natural disasters; or a combination of these or other factors. A significant decline in general economic conditions could impact local economic conditions and, in turn, have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

We are subject to extensive government regulation and supervision.

We are subject to extensive regulation and supervision under federal and state laws and regulations. The restrictions imposed by such laws and regulations limit the manner in which we conduct business, undertake new investments and activities and obtain financing. These regulations are designed primarily for the protection of the deposit insurance funds and consumers and not to benefit our shareholders. Congress and federal regulatory agencies continually review banking laws, regulations and policies for possible changes. Most recently, the Dodd-Frank Act was enacted, implementing sweeping reforms to the financial services industry. A number of provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act remain to be implemented through the rulemaking process at various regulatory agencies. We are unable to predict what the final form of these rules will be when implemented by the respective agencies, but management believes that certain aspects of the new legislation including, without limitation, the additional cost of higher deposit insurance and the costs of compliance with disclosure and reporting requirements and examinations by the new Consumer Financial Protection Agency, could have a significant impact on our business, financial condition and results of operations. Further, federal monetary policies, particularly as implemented through the Federal Reserve, significantly affect short-term interest rates and credit conditions, and any unfavorable change in these conditions could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition or results of

operations.

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It is possible that there will be continued changes to the banking and financial institutions regulatory regimes in the future. Changes to statutes, regulations or regulatory policies, including changes in interpretation or implementation of statutes, regulations or policies, could affect us in substantial and unpredictable ways. Such changes could subject us to additional costs, limit the types of financial services and products we may offer and/or increase the ability of non-banks to offer competing financial services and products, among other things. We cannot predict the extent to which the government and governmental organizations may change any of these laws or controls. We also cannot predict how such changes would adversely affect our business and prospects.

We are subject to interest rate risk.

Our earnings and cash flows are largely dependent upon our net interest income. Interest rates are highly sensitive to many factors that are beyond our control, including general economic conditions and policies of various governmental and regulatory agencies and, in particular, the Federal Reserve. Changes in monetary policy, including changes in interest rates, could influence not only the interest we receive on loans and securities and the amount of interest we pay on deposits and borrowings, but such changes could also affect (i) our ability to originate loans and obtain deposits, (ii) the fair value of our financial assets and liabilities, and (iii) the average duration of our securities portfolio and other interest-earning rates received on loans and other investments, our net interest income, and therefore, earnings could be adversely affected. Earnings could also be adversely affected if the interest rates received on loans and other investments fall more quickly than the interest rates paid on deposits and other borrowings.

Although management believes it has implemented effective asset and liability management strategies to reduce the potential effects of changes in interest rates on our results of operations, any substantial, unexpected, prolonged change in market interest rates could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. For further discussion related to our management of interest rate risk, please refer to [Liquidity and Capital Resources](#) [Interest Rate Risk](#) in [Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations](#), which is included in the Annual Report to Shareholders attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference.

We rely heavily on our management team and on our ability to attract and retain key personnel.

We are a customer-focused and relationship-driven organization. Future growth is expected to be driven in large part by the relationships we maintain with our customers. Additionally, it is important for us to continue to attract, hire, motivate and retain skilled personnel to develop new customer relationships as well as new financial products and services. The market for such people is competitive and there is no assurance that we will be successful in attracting, hiring, motivating or retaining them.

Competition from other financial services providers could adversely impact our results of operation.

The banking and financial services business is highly competitive. We face competition in making loans, attracting deposits and providing trust services. Increased competition in the banking and financial services business may reduce our market share, impair its growth or cause the prices we charge for our services to decline. For further discussion related to our competition in our market area, please refer to [Competition](#) in Item 1 of this Annual Report on Form 10-K.



***We obtain a significant portion of our noninterest revenue through service fees on deposit accounts; recent legislation and regulations impacting service fees could reduce our fee income.***

A significant portion of our noninterest revenue is derived from service fee income. One of the components of this service fee income is overdraft-related fees. Management anticipates that changes in banking regulations, and in particular the Federal Reserve's recently adopted rules pertaining to certain overdraft payments on consumer accounts and the FDIC's Overdraft Payment Programs and Consumer Protection Final Overdraft Payment Supervisory Guidance, will have a significant adverse impact on our service fee income and overall results. Additionally, management anticipates that changes in customer behavior as well as increased competition from other financial institutions will result in declines in deposit accounts or in overdraft frequency resulting in a decline in service fee income. A reduction in deposit account fee income could have a material adverse effect on our earnings.

***Our ability to declare and pay dividends is limited by law.***

We derive our income primarily from dividends received from owning the Bank's common stock. Federal and state law limit the Bank's ability to declare and pay dividends. In addition, the Federal Reserve may impose restrictions on our ability to declare and pay dividends on our common stock. For further discussion related to restrictions on our ability to declare and pay dividends, please refer to "Regulation and Supervision" in Item 1 of this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

***We may elect or be compelled to seek additional capital in the future, but that capital may not be available on favorable terms when it is needed.***

We are required by federal regulatory authorities to maintain adequate levels of capital to support our operations. In addition, we may elect to raise additional capital to support our business or to finance any acquisitions or we may otherwise elect or be required to raise additional capital. Our ability to raise additional capital, if needed, will depend on conditions in the capital markets, economic conditions and a number of other factors, many of which are outside our control, and on our financial performance. Accordingly, we cannot provide assurance of our ability to raise additional capital if needed or to be able to do so on terms acceptable to us. If we cannot raise additional capital on favorable terms when needed, it may have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

***Our common stock is not listed or traded on any established securities market and is normally less liquid than securities traded in those markets.***

Our common stock is not listed or traded on any established securities market and there are no plans to seek to list our common stock on any recognized exchange. Accordingly, our common stock has substantially less daily trading volume than the average securities listed on any national securities exchange. Most transactions in our common stock are privately negotiated trades and the shares are very thinly traded. There is no dealer for our stock and no market maker. These factors can reduce the marketability of our shares and the lack of a liquid market can produce downward pressure on our stock price.

***Maintaining or increasing our market share may depend upon our ability to adapt our products and services to evolving industry standards and consumer preferences.***



Our success depends, in part, on our ability to adapt our products and services as well as our distribution of them to evolving industry standards and consumer preferences. Payment methods have evolved with the advancement of technology, such as consumer use of smart phones and PayPal accounts to pay bills, thereby increasing competitive pressure in the delivery of financial products and services. The development and adoption by us of new technologies could require us to make substantial expenditures to modify our existing products and services. Further, we might not be successful in developing or introducing new products and services, adapting to changing consumer preferences and spending and saving habits, achieving market acceptance or regulatory approval, or sufficiently maintaining and growing a loyal customer base. Our inability to adapt to evolving industry standards and consumer preferences could have an adverse impact on our financial condition or results of operations.

***Security breaches and other disruptions could compromise our information and expose us to liability, which would cause our business and reputation to suffer.***

A failure of our operating systems or infrastructure, or those of our third-party vendors, could disrupt our business. Our business is dependent on our ability to process and monitor large numbers of daily transactions in compliance with legal and regulatory standards. As processing demands change and our loan portfolios grow in both volume and differing terms and conditions, developing and maintaining our operating systems and infrastructure becomes increasingly challenging and there is no assurance that we can adequately or efficiently develop and maintain such systems.

Our operations rely on the secure processing, storage and transmission of personal, confidential and other information in our computer systems and networks. Although we take protective measures, our computer systems, software and networks may be vulnerable to unauthorized access, computer viruses, malicious attacks and other events that could have a security impact beyond our control. If one or more of such events occur, personal, confidential and other information processed and stored in, and transmitted through, our computer systems and networks could be jeopardized or could cause interruptions or malfunctions in our operations that could result in significant losses or reputational damage. We have put in place secure transmission capability, and work to ensure third parties follow similar procedures. An interception, misuse or mishandling of personal, confidential or proprietary information being sent to or received from a customer or third party could result in legal liability, regulatory action and reputational harm. In the event personal, confidential or other information is jeopardized, intercepted, misused or mishandled, we may be required to expend significant additional resources to modify our protective measures or to investigate and remediate vulnerabilities or other exposures, and we may be subject to fines, penalties, litigation costs and settlements and financial losses that are either not insured against or not fully covered through any insurance maintained by us. Any of these events could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition or results of operations.

Item 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments.

None.

Item 2. Properties.

At December 31, 2012, the Bank maintained a main office in Columbia, Tennessee, 19 other offices (one of which is only a loan production office) and 35 separate automatic teller or cash dispensing machine locations. In addition to the main office in Columbia, the Bank's 18 other offices are located in the following locations throughout Middle Tennessee and northern Alabama:



| City         | County     | Offices |
|--------------|------------|---------|
| Bon Aqua     | Hickman    | 1       |
| Centerville  | Hickman    | 1       |
| Chapel Hill  | Marshall   | 1       |
| Columbia     | Maury      | 4       |
| Franklin     | Williamson | 2       |
| Lawrenceburg | Lawrence   | 2       |
| Lewisburg    | Marshall   | 1       |
| Loretto      | Lawrence   | 1       |
| Mt. Pleasant | Maury      | 1       |
| Pulaski      | Giles      | 1       |
| Spring Hill  | Maury      | 2       |
| White Bluff  | Dickson    | 1       |
| Florence, AL | Lauderdale | 1       |
|              | Total:     | 19      |

The Bank's office at S. James Campbell Boulevard, Columbia, Tennessee is located on property that is leased and the bank also leases space in a Kroger store in Columbia. The Bank only provides automatic teller machine services at the following locations:

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 2223 Carmack Blvd (Quik Mart/Shell)             | Columbia, TN     |
| 312 East James Campbell (QuickMart/Shell)       | Columbia, TN     |
| 1120 Hampshire Pike (Quik Mart/Shell)           | Columbia, TN     |
| 1517 Hampshire Pike (Quik Mart/Shell)           | Columbia, TN     |
| 1224 Trobtwood Ave. (Maury Regional)            | Columbia, TN     |
| 147 Bear Creek Pike (Farm Bureau)               | Columbia, TN     |
| 2577 Nashville Highway (Quik Mart/Shell)        | Columbia, TN     |
| 5414 Main Street (Quik Mart/Shell)              | Columbia, TN     |
| 9170 new Lawrenceburg Highway (Quik Mart/Shell) | Columbia, TN     |
| 121 2nd Ave. South                              | Lewisburg, TN    |
| 1748 Mooresville Rd (Shopping Center)           | Lewisburg, TN    |
| 800 North Ellington Parkway(Quik Mart/Shell)    | Lewisburg, TN    |
| 710 East Gaines (Quik Mart/Shell)               | Lawrenceburg, TN |
| 2100 North Locust (Quik Mart/Shell)             | Lawrenceburg, TN |
| 1607 S. Locust Ave. (Crocket Hospital)          | Lawrenceburg, TN |
| 215 South Military(Quik Mart/Shell)             | Loretto, TN      |

For more information on the properties owned and leased by the Corporation and the Bank, please refer to Notes 5 and 7 to the Consolidated Financial Statements, which are included in the Annual Report to Shareholders attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference.

### Item 3. Legal Proceedings.

The Corporation, the Bank and the subsidiaries of the Bank are, from time to time, subject to claims or suits arising in the ordinary course of business. The Corporation, the Bank and the subsidiaries of the Bank currently are not a party to any legal proceeding that, in management's

opinion, would have a material adverse effect on the Corporation's financial condition or results of operations.

**Item 4. Mine Safety Disclosure.**

Not applicable.

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## PART II

## Item 5. Market for Registrant's Common Equity, Related Stockholder Matters and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities.

A discussion of the Corporation's common stock and related shareholder matters is set forth in Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations and Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements, each of which is included in the Annual Report to Shareholders attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference. There were no sales of unregistered securities of the Corporation during the 12 months ended December 31, 2012.

The following table provides information regarding purchases of the Corporation's common stock made by the Corporation during the fourth quarter of 2012:

| Period                               | Total Number of Shares Purchased | Average Price Paid per Share | Total Number of Shares Purchased as Part of Publicly Announced Plans or Programs | Maximum Number (or Approximate Dollar Value) of Shares that May Yet Be Purchased Under the Plans or Programs |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|--|
| October 1, 2012 - October 31, 2012   | -                                | \$ -                         | -  | \$ -   |
| November 1, 2012 - November 30, 2012 | -                                | \$ -                         | -  | \$ -   |
| December 1, 2012 - December 31, 2012 | 100,000*                         | \$ 22.50                     | -  | \$ -   |
| Total                                | 100,000                          | \$ 22.50                     | -  | \$ -   |

\*Purchased through negotiated transactions with several third-party sellers.

## Item 6. Selected Financial Data.

The selected financial data, set forth in the Annual Report to Shareholders under the caption Selected Financial Information, is attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference.

## Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations.

Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations is included in the Annual Report to Shareholders attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference.

## Item 7A. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk.

A discussion of the market risk of the Corporation and the Bank as of December 31, 2012 related to the investment debt and equity securities held by the Corporation and the Bank is set forth in Note 2 to the Consolidated Financial Statements, which is included in the Annual Report to Shareholders attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference. A discussion of the market risk in the loan portfolio of the Bank is set forth in Note 3 to the Consolidated Financial Statements and in the section entitled Liquidity and

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Capital Resources Loans and Loan Quality in Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, each of which is included in the Annual Report to Shareholders attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference. A discussion of the rate sensitivity of all earning assets and interest-bearing liabilities of the Corporation and the Bank is set forth in the section entitled Liquidity and Capital Resources Interest Rate Risk in Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, which is included in the Annual Report to Shareholders attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference.

Item 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data.

Financial statements and supplementary data are set forth in the Consolidated Financial Statements and Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements, each of which is included in the Annual Report to Shareholders attached as Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K and is incorporated herein by reference.

Item 9. Changes in and Disagreements with Accountants on Accounting and Financial Disclosure.

None.

Item 9A. Controls and Procedures.

*Conclusion Regarding the Effectiveness of Disclosure Controls and Procedures*

The Corporation with the participation of its management, including the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer and Treasurer (principal financial officer), carried out an evaluation of the effectiveness of the design and operation of its disclosure controls and procedures (as defined in Rules 13a-15 and 15d-15 under the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act)) as of the end of the period covered by this Report.

Based upon that evaluation and as of the end of the period covered by this Report, the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer and Treasurer (principal financial officer) concluded that, as a result of the material weaknesses referenced in the Management Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting incorporated by reference into Item 8 of this Report, the Corporation's disclosure controls and procedures were not effective in ensuring that information required to be disclosed in the reports that the Corporation files or submits to the SEC under the Exchange Act is recorded, processed, summarized and reported on a timely basis. Notwithstanding the identification of these material weaknesses, the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer and Treasurer (principal financial officer) have concluded that the Consolidated Financial Statements of the Corporation incorporated by reference into Item 8 of this Report fairly present in all material respects the Corporation's financial condition, results of operations and cash flows as of the dates and for the periods presented in this Report.

Pursuant to Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, the Corporation has included a report of management's assessment of the design and operating effectiveness of its internal controls as part of this Report.

*Changes in Internal Control Over Financial Reporting*

Management's assessment of the Corporation's internal control over financial reporting identified two material weaknesses in the Corporation's internal control over financial reporting related to errors in accounting for the Corporation's defined benefit post-retirement health care plan and the amortization of FDIC pre-paid insurance as of December 31, 2012. These errors were the result of a lack of sufficient resources within the Corporation with the requisite expertise to handle the accounting for these items. Other than the identification of these material weaknesses, there was no change in the Corporation's internal control over financial reporting during the fourth quarter ended December 31, 2012 that has materially affected, or is reasonably likely to materially affect, the Corporation's internal control over financial reporting.

*Remediation Plan for Material Weaknesses in Internal Control Over Financial Reporting*

Subsequent to December 31, 2012, and immediately following management's identification of the above-referenced material weaknesses, management began taking steps to remediate these material weaknesses. These efforts are described in referenced in the Management Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting incorporated by reference into Item 8 of this Report.



Management anticipates that these remedial actions will strengthen the Corporation's internal control over financial reporting and will, over time, address the material weaknesses that were identified as of December 31, 2012. Because some of these remedial actions will take place on a quarterly basis, their successful implementation may need to be evaluated over several quarters before management is able to conclude that the material weaknesses have been remediated. The Corporation cannot provide any assurance that these remediation efforts will be successful or that the Corporation's internal control over financial reporting will be effective as a result of these efforts.

### PART III

#### Item 10. Directors, Executive Officers and Corporate Governance.

Reference is made to information in the Corporation's Proxy Statement relating to the 2012 Annual Meeting of Shareholders (the Proxy Statement) under the captions Proposal 1: Election of Directors, Executive Officers, Corporate Governance Committees of the Board of Directors, Corporate Governance Code of Ethics, and General Information Section 16 (a) Beneficial Ownership Reporting Compliance, which information is incorporated herein by reference.

#### Item 11. Executive Compensation.

Reference is made to information in the Proxy Statement under the captions Compensation Discussion and Analysis, Executive Compensation, Compensation of Directors, Compensation Committee Interlocks and Insider Participation and Compensation Committee Report, which information is incorporated herein by reference.

#### Item 12. Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management and Related Stockholder Matters.

Reference is made to information in the Proxy Statement under the captions Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management, which information is incorporated herein by reference.

#### Item 13. Certain Relationships and Related Transactions, and Director Independence.

Reference is made to information in the Proxy Statement under the captions Corporate Governance Director Independence and Related Person Transactions, which information is incorporated herein by reference.

#### Item 14. Principal Accounting Fees and Services.

Reference is made to information in the Proxy Statement under the captions Audit Committee Report and Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm, which information is incorporated herein by reference.



PART IV

Item 15. Exhibits, Financial Statement Schedules.

(a) (1) Financial statements are set forth in the Consolidated Financial Statements and Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements, which are incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 13 to this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

(2) All financial statement schedules are omitted because they are not applicable or not required, or because the required information is included in the Consolidated Financial Statements or Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements referenced in Item 15(a)(1).

(3) Exhibits:

3.1 Charter. (1)

3.2 Articles of Amendment to Charter. (1)

3.3 Second Amended and Restated Bylaws, as amended. (2)

4 Specimen Stock Certificate. (1)

10.1 Profit Sharing Plan. (3)\*

10.2 First Amendment to Profit Sharing Plan. (3)\*

10.3 Second Amendment to Profit Sharing Plan. (3)\*

10.4 Executive Salary Continuation Agreement by and between First Farmers and Merchants National Bank and Waymon L. Hickman, dated as of December 1, 1992. (3)\*

10.5 Benefits Agreement by and between First Farmers and Merchants Bank and Thomas Randall Stevens, the Bank's and the Corporation's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, dated as of January 26, 2007. (4)\*

10.6 Benefits Agreement by and between John P. Tomlinson, III, the Bank's and Corporation's Chief Administrative Officer, dated as of January 29, 2007. (4)\*

10.7 Form of First Farmers and Merchants Corporation Amended and Restated Director Deferred Compensation Agreement.(5)\*

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- 10.8 First Amendment to the First Farmers and Merchants Corporation Amended and Restated Director Deferred Compensation Agreement with John P. Tomlinson, III, dated as of December 18, 2007. (5)\*
- 10.9 Form of First Farmers and Merchants Bank Amended and Restated Director Deferred Compensation Agreement. (5)\*
- 10.10 First Amendment to the First Farmers and Merchants Bank Director Deferred Compensation Agreement with Thomas Randall Stevens, dated as of January 5, 2007. (5)\*
- 10.11 First Amendment to the First Farmers and Merchants Bank Amended and Restated Director Deferred Compensation Agreement with John P. Tomlinson, III, dated as of December 18, 2007. (5)\*
- 10.12 Form of First Farmers and Merchants National Bank Director Split Dollar Agreement. (5)\*
- 10.13 Form of Amendment to the First Farmers and Merchants National Bank Director Split Dollar Agreement. (5)\*
- 10.14 First Farmers & Merchants Bank Group Term Carve-Out Plan, dated as of March 27, 2007. (5)\*
- 10.15 First Farmers and Merchants National Bank Group Term Carve-Out Plan, dated as of July 23, 2002. (5)\*

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- 10.16 Amendment to the First Farmers and Merchants National Bank Group Term Carve-Out Plan, dated as of July 23, 2002. (5)\*
- 10.17 First Farmers & Merchants Bank Life Insurance Endorsement Method Split Dollar Plan Agreement, dated as of January 7, 2008. (5)\*
- 10.18 Form of First Farmers and Merchants Corporation Director Deferred Compensation Agreement. (5)\*
- 10.19 Form of First Farmers and Merchants Bank Director Deferred Compensation Agreement. (5)\*
- 10.20 First Farmers and Merchants Bank Director Deferred Compensation Agreement with Tim E. Pettus, dated as of March 5, 2008. (5)\*
- 10.21 First Farmers and Merchants Corporation Director Deferred Compensation Agreement with Tim E. Pettus, dated as of March 5, 2008. (5)\*
- 13 Annual Report to Shareholders.
- 21 List of Subsidiaries.
- 31.1 Certification of the Chief Executive Officer of First Farmers and Merchants Corporation pursuant to Rule 13a-14 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, as adopted pursuant to Section 302 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.
- 31.2 Certification of the Treasurer (principal financial officer) of First Farmers and Merchants Corporation pursuant to Rule 13a-14 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, as adopted pursuant to Section 302 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.
- 32 Certification of the Chief Executive Officer and Treasurer (principal financial officer) of First Farmers and Merchants Corporation pursuant to 18 U.S.C. Section 1350, as Adopted Pursuant to Section 906 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.
- 101 Pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T, the following financial information from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, is formatted in XBRL (Extensible Business Reporting Language) interactive data files: (i) the Consolidated Balance Sheets as of December 31, 2012 and 2011; (ii) the Consolidated Statements of Income for each of the years ended December 31, 2012, 2011 and 2010; (iii) the Consolidated Statements of Changes in Shareholders' Equity for each of the years ended December 31, 2012, 2011 and 2010; (iv) the Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows for each of the years ended December 31, 2012, 2011 and 2010; and (v) the Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements, tagged as blocks of text. (6)

\* Indicates a compensatory plan or arrangement.

(1) Incorporated by reference to the First Farmers and Merchants Corporation Amendment No. 1 to the Annual Report on Form 10-K/A for the year ended December 31, 2003, as filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on May 7, 2004 (File Number 000-10972).

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(2) Incorporated by reference to the First Farmers and Merchants Corporation Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2010, as filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 13, 2011 (File Number 000-10972).

(3) Incorporated by reference to the First Farmers and Merchants Corporation Amendment No. 2 to the Annual Report on Form 10-K/A for the year ended December 31, 2003, as filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on July 19, 2004 (File Number 000-10972).

(4) Incorporated by reference to the First Farmers and Merchants Corporation Current Report on Form 8-K, as filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on January 30, 2007 (File Number 000-10972).

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- (5) Incorporated by reference to the First Farmers and Merchants Corporation Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2008, as filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 13, 2009 (File Number 000-10972).
- (6) As provided in Rule 406T of Regulation S-T, this information is furnished and not filed for purposes of Sections 11 and 12 of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

## SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

## FIRST FARMERS AND MERCHANTS CORPORATION

By /s/ T. Randy Stevens

T. Randy Stevens

Chief Executive Officer

Date: March 28, 2013

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, this report has been signed below by the following persons on behalf of the registrant and in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

| <u>Signature</u>   | <u>Title</u>  | <u>Date</u> |
|--|---|-------------|
| /s / PATRICIA P. BEARDEN<br>Patricia P. Bearden          | Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer (Principal financial officer and principal accounting officer) | 3/28/2013   |
| /s / KENNETH A. ABERCROMBIE<br>Kenneth A. Abercrombie    | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ JAMES L. BAILEY, JR.<br>James L. Bailey, Jr.         | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ M. DARLENE BAXTER<br>M. Darlene Baxter               | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ JONATHAN M. EDWARDS<br>Jonathan M. Edwards           | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ TOM NAPIER GORDON<br>Tom Napier Gordon               | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ DALTON M. MOUNGER<br>Dalton M. Mounger               | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ TIMOTHY E. PETTUS<br>Timothy E. Pettus               | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ JOSEPH W. REMKE, III<br>Joseph W. Remke, III         | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ PATRICK J. RILEY<br>Patrick J. Riley                 | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ MATTHEW M. SCOGGINS, JR.<br>Matthew M. Scoggins, Jr. | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ T. RANDY STEVENS, III<br>T. Randy Stevens, III       | Director, Chief Executive Officer<br>(Principal Executive Officer)                                | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ W. LACY UPCHURCH<br>W. Lacy Upchurch                 | Director  | 3/28/2013   |
| /s/ KIMBERLY VELLA                                       | Director  | 3/28/2013   |

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|   |          |           |
|---|----------|-----------|
| Kimberly Vella<br>/s/ DAN C. WHEELER    | Director | 3/28/2013 |
| Dan C. Wheeler<br>/s/ DAVID S. WILLIAMS | Director | 3/28/2013 |
| David S. Williams                       |          |           |

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**EXHIBIT INDEX**

**FIRST FARMERS AND MERCHANTS CORPORATION**

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