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**CONTACT: Frank Limpus  
615-668-9938**

**JIMMY & AVAGENE MOORE HONORED AS 2014  
FIRST FARMERS & MERCHANTS BANK ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS**

*Couple designates Lawrence County Humane Society to receive Award prize*

**LAWRENCEBURG, Tenn. (September 9, 2014)** – Jimmy and Avagene Moore compliment each other well. Yin and Yang, if you will. In fact, the phrase "Two lives, one life" comes to mind when you hear their stories.

They are fascinating individuals who have achieved much in their stellar careers. Yet they've made respecting, appreciating and honoring each other an art form. They're natives of Lawrence County who have seen world stages and world events up close and personal, yet they've resisted the temptation to move away from where they've put down serious roots with family and friends.

They have sincere, small-town values and are not afraid to live them out, which has earned them admirers.

So this past Thursday night, First Farmers & Merchants Bank and a crowd of friends and family from the Lawrenceburg community and beyond honored them with the 2014 First Farmers Achievement Award. It was a heartwarming evening that said much about this Middle Tennessee couple and why they were chosen to receive the Award.

"I just can't think of a finer couple that illustrates all that this Award stands for than Jimmy and Avagene Moore," said Tim Pettus, president, First Farmers & Merchants Bank, and a native Lawrence Countian himself, following the event. "Their lives together has been the epitome of caring, helping, leading and achieving, not just for themselves, but for their family, friends, co-workers and community, as well. They've held interesting careers and shown us what being a committed couple and outstanding

citizens are all about. We're delighted to present this award to them -- the first couple to receive it in the six years we've been awarding this distinction."

The evening offered an opportunity to showcase all that the pair has done before and during their 56 years of marriage. Much of the focus was on how well each have excelled at their chosen careers -- Avagene's in emergency preparedness/management and Jimmy's in photography/videography and poetry/writing.

Avagene was the first female Civil Defense Director appointed in Lawrenceburg/Lawrence County and in the State of Tennessee, the early phase of expertise that has since taken her around the world. She has lectured extensively on emergency preparedness and disaster management, even testified before Congress. As Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grew in importance, she has helped communities prepare for and react to all types of catastrophes and emergencies. She was President of the International Association of Emergency Managers and in 2011 was inducted into the International Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness Hall of Fame. Today, she is semi-retired, but still serves as a consultant to FEMA and other governmental agencies.

In her remarks, she thanked several mentors who provided her opportunities through her life to excel in her emergency preparedness career, while also sharing her ideas about both her own and the government's efforts to ensure America is a country prepared for any disaster.

"One of the things I feel that schools could do in this area is to teach life skills to students -- basic first aid, CPR, how to take care of the home and family when accidents and disasters occur, things like that." She used a story about handling one of her son's accidents as an example of how personal knowledge and preparation can truly save a life.

Jimmy's wide-ranging career has mostly centered around both still and TV cameras. From producing and appearing in the always-famous "Hee Haw" television show for nine years, to assignments with the military, states and corporations photographing and videoing events, to serving as Mission

Leader for the National Guard Bureau Documentation Team at Ground Zero, September 11-21, 2001, Jimmy has seemingly always had a camera in his hands. One year it gained him a Grammy nomination and a Gospel Music Association Dove Award for best album cover.

"I've been blessed," he said before the evening's festivities.

As a testament to the hundreds of commercials, videos and album/CD covers he has shot for musical artists of all genres, a special message from The Oak Ridge Boys was read, congratulating the couple on receiving the honor. It followed a captivating video illustrating work from throughout Jimmy's career and remarks from Randy Brewer, a Lawrenceburg neighbor of the Moore's, who shared tales of growing up next door to the honorees.

Interestingly, both of the Moore's are now writing books, Avagene's concerning marriage and Jimmy's about his life.

But mostly on display at the awards dinner, held at Coleman United Methodist Church in Lawrenceburg, was their mutual respect and support for others and each other. One outward demonstration of their compassion came as the pair announced their designation of the Lawrence County Humane Society to receive the \$1000 prize that accompanies winning the Award.

"We are huge animal lovers and have rescued a number of animals through the years," said Avagene in presenting the award to Carol Wyatt, director of the Humane Society. "We know this support will go to good use."

In the audience for the evening was the couple's family, two of their three grown children, Pam Moore Davis and Steve Moore, three of their four grandchildren and Avagene's mother. Their other daughter, Kim, a teacher in Kentucky, was unable to attend.

The evening ended with remarks from both Brian Williams, executive vice president, and T. Randy Stevens, chairman and CEO of First Farmers affirming what an honor it had been for the bank to honor the couple.

Launched in 2009, the First Farmers & Merchants Bank Achievement Award seeks to recognize individuals who have been quiet but effective achievers and whose integrity and successes are representative of both the American spirit and the values of First Farmers. Previous winners include: Con Vrailas (2013), owner of MAGIC Restaurants, Inc.; Ricky Watson (2012), Brentwood, Tennessee's chief of police; Aubrey Flagg (2011), an associate professor of Geography at Columbia State Community College; David Weathers (2010), a Major League Baseball veteran and Lawrenceburg native; and Gwendolynne Smith Jackson (2009), a Knoxville veterinarian and graduate of Columbia secondary and collegiate schools.

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***About First Farmers & Merchants Bank***

*Founded in 1909, First Farmers & Merchants Bank (Member FDIC) today has total assets of more than \$1 billion and an additional \$3 billion in assets held by its Trust & Financial Management Department. Headquartered in Columbia, Tenn., the bank operates 18 branch offices in a seven-county area in Middle Tennessee that includes Maury, Lawrence, Marshall, Hickman, Giles, Dickson and Williamson counties. The new Davidson County branch office, the bank's 19th, is slated to open in the fourth quarter of 2014. For additional information, visit [www.myfirstfarmers.com](http://www.myfirstfarmers.com) or call the main office at (931) 388-3145.*