

HARDWICK MARK K
Form 4
February 14, 2006

FORM 4 UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

| | | | | |
|---|---------|----------|--|---|
| 1. Name and Address of Reporting Person * | | | 2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol | 5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer |
| HARDWICK MARK K | | | FIRST MERCHANTS CORP [FRME] | (Check all applicable) |
| (Last) | (First) | (Middle) | 3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) | ____ Director <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Officer (give title below) |
| | | | 02/10/2006 | ____ 10% Owner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (specify below) Executive Vice President / Chief Financial Officer |
| 200 EAST JACKSON STREET | | | 4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year) | 6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line) |
| | | (Street) | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person <input type="checkbox"/> Form filed by More than One Reporting Person |
| MUNICE, IN 47305 | | | | |
| (City) | (State) | (Zip) | | |

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| | | | | (A) or (D) | Amount or Price | | |
| Common Stock <u>(1)</u> <u>(2)</u> | 02/10/2006 | | A | A | 2,000 \$ 0 | 2,720 | D |

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB control number.

SEC 1474 (9-02)

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

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| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | 7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4) | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|---|-----------------|-------|----------------------------|
| | | | | | | | Amount or Number of Shares | | | |
| | | | | | | | Date Exercisable | Expiration Date | Title | Amount or Number of Shares |
| | | | | | | | Code | V | (A) | (D) |
| Employee Stock Option (Right to Buy) | \$ 25.14 | 02/10/2006 | | A | 7,000 | 02/10/2008 02/10/2016 | Common | 7,000 | | |

Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address | Relationships | | | |
|--|---------------|-----------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Director | 10% Owner | Officer | Other |
| HARDWICK MARK K 200 EAST JACKSON STREET MUNICE, IN 47305 | | | Executive Vice President | Chief Financial Officer |

Signatures

Larry R. Helms (Confirming Statement on File) 02/14/2006

__Signature of Reporting Person Date

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 4(b)(v).
- ** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- (1) Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned Direct: 2720
- (2) Deferred Stock Units Owned Directly: 774.20

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.