



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ChillyLYNX® Crew Ready to Plunge for Special Olympics Vermont!**

**SOUTH BURLINGTON, VT**—Jeff LaBonte, Branch President and Leader of the ChillyLYNX® Crew announced Merchants Bank’s sponsorship of and participation in the 2006 Penguin Plunge. This will be the seventh year of sponsorship and the fifth year of staff participation for Merchants Bank. Approximately 14 employees and their family members are ready to brave the icy waters for Special Olympics Vermont.

“The cause keeps us warm,” says LaBonte. “I don’t go near the water in the summer time, but for Special Olympics Vermont, I’ll jump in the lake in the middle of winter!” he continued.

Now, in its 11<sup>th</sup> year, the Burlington Penguin Plunge is one of the major fundraisers for Special Olympics Vermont whose mission is: “To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendships with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.”

The Burlington Penguin Plunge is part of the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Burlington Winter Festival, which features a variety of fun-filled events held on the waterfront. Activities include music, snow sculptures, ice carving and a chili cook off. Other Penguin Plunges in conjunction with Special Olympics Vermont are held in Newport and Bennington, Vermont. The Burlington Penguin Plunge is scheduled for 11am, Saturday, February 11.

For more information, please call (802) 863-5222, extension 106, email [kellmore@vtso.org](mailto:kellmore@vtso.org), or visit [www.vtso.org](http://www.vtso.org). You may also contact Burlington Parks and Recreation Department by calling (802) 864-0123 or visiting [www.enjoyburlington.com](http://www.enjoyburlington.com)

The continuing mission of Merchants Bank is to provide Vermonters with a true community bank. It fulfills this commitment through a branch-based system that includes 35 bank offices and 41 ATMs throughout Vermont, personal bankers dedicated to top-quality customer service, and streamlined products: FreedomLYNX® Banking which consists of Free Checking for Life®, a Money Market Account, Free Online Banking and Bill Pay, Overdraft Coverage, Direct Deposit, a Free Debit Card and Free Automated Phone Banking; TimeLYNX® Certificates of Deposit; HomeLYNX® Home Equity Loans; RealLYNX® Residential Mortgages and CommerceLYNX® Business Banking. For more information about Merchants Bank, visit [mbvt.com](http://mbvt.com). Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender.