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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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George E. Little Jr. Honored as Vermont Philanthropist of the Year

George E. Little Jr. of Burlington is Vermont's Outstanding Philanthropist for 2003. The Northern New England Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP-NNE) honored him, along with award-winners Oakhurst Dairy from Maine and Tom Haas from New Hampshire, with a National Philanthropy Day Award on November 6 at the Grand Summit Hotel at Sunday River, Bethel, Maine.

National Philanthropy Day is celebrated on November 15 to recognize the profound impact that philanthropy has on society. Each year AFP-NNE honors individuals and groups who, through their hard work and dedication, have enhanced philanthropy and their communities in northern New England.

In accepting his award, Mr. Little said, "The opportunities I have had to participate in a number of campaigns, boards, and committees are highlights of my life." He called his volunteer efforts "very satisfying work." He added, "The award makes me realize that all my associates who helped so much are the folks who made this honor possible."

Mr. Little was described as "a pillar of our community," whose inspiration and involvement have touched lives and improved society throughout Vermont. He has been active in community economic development projects, revitalization of neighborhoods in Burlington's North End, and other service for the University of Vermont, the McClure Multigenerational Center, Burlington City Arts, Vermont Community Foundation, the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf, ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center, and many other organizations. He also represented Chittenden County in the Vermont House and Senate.

"I was once asked what personal qualities helped make philanthropic efforts at all successful," he told the gathering. "My answer was: have the patience of Job, be able to put yourself in someone else's shoes, and be creative." He recalled once sending a video to a prospective major donor and including a large bag of popcorn – which resulted in a generous donation for an important community program.

Cited for his ability to motivate others to improve the local community, Mr. Little was called "an exemplary model for the next generation of community leaders and philanthropists."

He pointed out the "Vermont has the greatest number, per capita, of non-profits of any state." He noted, "These 2,956 organizations in our small state give motivated persons lots of chances to participate."

The Association of Fundraising Professionals is dedicated to advancing philanthropy through education and training of those working as fundraising professionals in the not-for-profit world. AFP certifies professional fundraisers, establishes a code of ethics for conducting fundraising activities, and fosters the preservation and enhancement of philanthropy in our communities.

National Philanthropy Day Awards for Northern New England are sponsored by AFP-NNE in partnership with Demont & Associates, a leading fundraising counsel based in Portland, Maine.