

INGLES MARKETS INC
Form 11-K
June 25, 2009
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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 11-K

ANNUAL REPORT

**PURSUANT TO SECTION 15(d) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

(Mark One)

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934
For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2008

TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934
For the transition period from _____ to _____

Commission file number: 0-14706

A. Full title of the plan and the address of the plan, if different from that of the issuer named below:
Ingles Markets, Incorporated

Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

B. Name of issuer of the securities held pursuant to the plan and the address of its principal executive office:

Ingles Markets, Incorporated

P.O. Box 6676

Asheville, North Carolina 28816

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AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND

SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULES

Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

As of December 31, 2008 and 2007, and for the Year Ended

December 31, 2008

With Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting

Firm

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Audited Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules

As of December 31, 2008 and 2007,

and for the Year Ended December 31, 2008

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Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

The Plan Administrative Committee

Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

We have audited the accompanying statements of net assets available for benefits of the Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan as of December 31, 2008 and 2007, and the related statement of changes in net assets available for benefits for the year ended December 31, 2008. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Plan's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with the Standards of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States). Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. We were not engaged to perform an audit of the Plan's internal control over financial reporting. Our audits included consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Plan's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, and evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the net assets available for benefits of the Plan at December 31, 2008 and 2007, and the changes in its net assets available for benefits for the year ended December 31, 2008, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States.

Our audits were performed for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements taken as a whole. The accompanying supplemental schedules of delinquent participant contributions for the year ended December 31, 2008, assets (held at end of year) as of December 31, 2008, and reportable transactions for the year ended December 31, 2008, are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statements but are supplementary information required by the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974. These supplemental schedules are the responsibility of the Plan's management. The supplemental schedules have been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in our audits of the financial statements and, in our opinion, are fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

/s/ ERNST & YOUNG LLP

Greenville, South Carolina

June 22, 2009

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Statements of Net Assets Available for Benefits

	December 31	
	2008	2007
Assets		
Investments at fair value:		
Employer securities	\$ 18,684,999	\$ 29,956,875
Collective trust funds	19,823,906	23,106,416
Mutual funds	17,139,033	24,322,429
Loans to participants	4,220,501	3,943,124
	59,868,439	81,328,844
Cash, non-interest bearing	182,454	1,843
Total assets	60,050,893	81,330,687
Liabilities		
Due to broker, net	182,457	1,841
Net assets available for benefits at fair value	59,868,436	81,328,846
Adjustment from fair value to contract value for fully benefit-responsive investment contracts held by collective trust funds	811,664	
Net assets available for benefits	\$ 60,680,100	\$ 81,328,846

See accompanying notes.

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available for Benefits

Year Ended December 31, 2008

Net investment loss:	
Net depreciation in fair value of investments	\$ (17,963,838)
Dividends	688,712
Interest	311,775
	(16,963,351)
Contributions:	
Participants	3,997,424
Rollover	174,105
Employer	1,081,947
	5,253,476
Total	(11,709,875)
Deductions	
Distributions to participants	8,610,861
Administrative expenses	327,575
Corrective distributions	435
Total deductions	8,938,871
Net decrease	(20,648,746)
Net assets available for benefits at beginning of year	81,328,846
Net assets available for benefits at end of year	\$ 60,680,100

See accompanying notes.

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2008

1. Description of the Plan

The following description of the Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan (the Plan) provides only general information. Participants should refer to the Plan document for a more complete description of the Plan's provisions. Copies of the Plan document are available from the Plan Administrative Committee.

General

The Plan is a defined contribution plan covering substantially all employees of Ingles Markets, Incorporated (the Company and Plan Sponsor) and its wholly-owned subsidiary Milkco, Inc. who have completed one year of eligible service as defined in the Plan document and are at least 18 years of age. The Plan is subject to the provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), as amended.

Contributions

The Plan provides for three types of contributions: (i) Company profit sharing plan contributions to the Ingles Stock Fund (Class B) made by the Company discretionary in nature; (ii) participant 401(k) contributions from 1 percent to 50 percent (in increments of 1 percent) of their pre-tax annual compensation as defined in the Plan document (subject to regulatory limitations), and (iii) Company 401(k) matching contributions, discretionary in nature and determined by the Company for each payroll period. During 2006, the Plan document was amended to change the limit of the discretionary 401(k) matching contribution from a maximum of 5 percent to a maximum of 3 percent of a participant's compensation as defined in the Plan document. In addition, all participants who have attained age 50 before the close of the Plan year shall be eligible to make catch-up contributions, also subject to regulatory limitations.

In 2008, the Company made discretionary 401(k) matching contributions of \$1,138,489, of which \$1,081,947 was funded in cash and \$56,542 was funded through forfeitures. The Company made no discretionary profit sharing contributions during 2008.

Participant Accounts

Each participant's account is credited with the participant's contributions and with allocations of Plan earnings and any Company matching and profit-sharing contributions. Allocations are based on participant account balances, participant compensation as defined in the Plan document, or participant contributions. The benefit to which a participant is entitled is the benefit that can be provided from the participant's vested account.

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

1. Description of the Plan (continued)

Upon enrollment in the Plan, participants may direct participant and Company matching contributions in 1 percent increments to any of the Plan's fund options. No participant 401(k) contributions can be made to the Ingles Stock Fund. Participants may change their investment options daily.

Vesting and Forfeitures

Contributions by participants plus actual earnings thereon are immediately 100 percent vested and nonforfeitable. Participants become vested in the Company's matching and profit sharing contributions on a graduated basis with 100 percent vesting occurring after the completion of six years of service.

Forfeited balances are utilized as follows:

- a) First, to restore the nonvested portion of the Company contribution accounts of certain terminated participants who subsequently participate in the Plan as a rehire as described in the Plan document.
- b) Second, at the discretion of the Plan Sponsor, to pay Plan expenses.
- c) Third, to reduce Plan Sponsor contributions as described in the Plan document.

Forfeitures of \$56,587 were used during 2008 to reduce the Company's matching contributions and to pay certain administrative expenses. Unallocated forfeitures at December 31, 2008, and 2007 were \$35,110 and \$15,321, respectively.

Participant Loans

Participants may borrow from their fund accounts a minimum of \$500 to a maximum equal to the lesser of \$50,000 or 50 percent of their vested balances with the term of the loan not exceeding five years except for loans to purchase the borrower's principal residence whose term shall not exceed ten years. The loans are secured by the balance in the participant's account. The interest rate used will be comparable to rates charged by local lending institutions for similar loans. Principal and interest are paid ratably through employee payroll deductions.

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

1. Description of the Plan (continued)

Payment of Benefits

Upon termination of service, death, disability or retirement, a participant, or their beneficiary in the case of death, may receive a lump-sum amount equal to the vested value of his or her account.

Administrative Expenses

Certain legal and accounting fees and certain administrative expenses relating to the Plan are paid by the Company and will not be reimbursed by the Plan. Other allowable expenses such as investment advisory fees are paid by the Plan.

Plan Termination

Although it has not expressed any intent to do so, the Company has the right under the Plan to discontinue its contributions at any time and to terminate the Plan subject to the provisions of ERISA. In the event of Plan termination, participants will become 100 percent vested in their accounts.

Plan Amendment

Effective January 1, 2007, the plan was amended and restated to comply with and make changes permitted by the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001; the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002; the Pension Protection Act of 2006 and to comply with final regulations issued by the Internal Revenue Service to Section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Included in this amendment were provisions to allow Plan participants to divest and reinvest, over a three year time period, the portion of their account that is invested in the Ingles Stock Fund. The three year phase in period does not apply to participants who had attained age 55 and completed three years of service as of January 1, 2006. Accordingly, the amounts listed in Note 4 as Nonparticipant-Directed Investments reflect the portion of the Ingles Stock Fund that could not be divested and reinvested by Plan participants at December 31, 2008 and 2007.

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

2. Summary of Accounting Policies

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

Investment contracts held by a defined contribution plan directly or indirectly via common collective trusts are required to be reported at fair value. However, contract value is the relevant measurement attribute for that portion of the net assets available for benefits of a defined contribution plan attributable to fully benefit-responsive investment contracts because contract value is the amount participants would receive if they were to initiate permitted transactions under the terms of the plan. The Statements of Net Assets Available for Benefits present the fair value of the investment contracts as well as the adjustment of the fully benefit-responsive investment contracts from fair value to contract value. The Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available for Benefits is prepared on a contract value basis.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements and accompanying notes. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Investment Valuation and Income Recognition

Investments are reported at fair value. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. See Note 5 for discussion of fair value measurements.

Purchases and sales of securities are recorded on a trade-date basis. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Dividends are recorded on the ex-dividend date. Net depreciation includes the plan's gains and losses on investments bought and sold as well as held during the year.

Payment of Benefits

Benefits are recorded when paid.

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

3. Investments

The primary trustee for the Plan, Wachovia Bank, N.A., is responsible for maintaining custody of the investment funds, excluding Ingles Markets, Incorporated stock. The Plan Administrative Committee appoints the trustees responsible for maintaining custody of the Ingles stock component of the Ingles Stock Fund.

During 2008, the Plan's investments (including investments purchased, sold, as well as held during the year) depreciated in value as follows:

	Net Depreciation in Fair Value of Investments
Employer securities (quoted market prices)	\$ (7,254,791)
Mutual funds (quoted market prices)	(8,151,757)
Collective trust funds (quoted redemption values)	(2,557,290)
Total	\$ (17,963,838)

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

3. Investments (continued)

The following presents investments that represent 5 percent or more of the Plan's net assets.

	December 31	
	2008	2007
Employer Securities:		
Ingles Stock Fund - Class B*	\$ 17,055,615	\$ 27,961,960
Mutual Funds:		
Evergreen Short Intermediate Bond Fund Class I	161,710	4,309,769
Loomis Sayles Investment Grade Bond Fund	3,141,627	
Oakmark Equity and Income Fund II	3,864,975	
Van Kampen Equity Income Fund Class A		6,143,797
Thornburg International Value Fund	2,178,528	4,215,320
Collective Trust Funds:		
Wachovia Diversified Stable Value Fund	14,979,715	12,567,793
Enhanced Stock Market Fund of Wachovia	5,046,622	8,458,391

*Part of Fund is nonparticipant-directed, see Note 4.

The Plan participates in benefit-responsive investment contracts through two collective trusts (Wachovia Diversified Stable Value Fund and Stable Investment Fund of Wachovia). Wachovia maintains the contributions in a general account. As described in Note 2, because the guaranteed investment contracts are fully benefit-responsive, contract value is the relevant measurement attribute for that portion of the net assets available for benefits attributable to the guaranteed investment contracts. Contract value represents contributions made under the contract, plus earnings, less participant withdrawals and administrative expenses. Participants may ordinarily direct the withdrawal or transfer of all or a portion of their investment at contract value.

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

4. Nonparticipant-Directed Investments

Information about the net assets and the significant components of the changes in net assets relating to the nonparticipant-directed investments is as follows:

	December 31	
	2008	2007
Net assets:		
Employer securities:		
Ingles Stock Fund Class B	\$	\$ 5,951,228
		Year Ended December 31, 2008
Changes in net assets:		
Net depreciation in fair value		\$ (1,513,389)
Distributions to participants		(338,839)
Transfers to other plan funds		(1,980,852)
Participant loans		(86,493)
Conversion from nonparticipant-directed status		(2,011,018)
Administrative expenses		(20,637)
Total		\$ (5,951,228)

As stated in Note 1, the Plan changes granted participants the ability to direct investments in the Ingles Stock Fund. Accordingly, the amounts converted to participant-directed status are shown in the table above. As of December 31, 2008, the amount remaining in nonparticipant-directed funds was \$0.

5. Fair Value Measurements

The Company has adopted Statement of Financial Accounting Standards (SFAS) No. 157, *Fair Value Measurements* (SFAS 157), and Financial Accounting Standards Board Staff Position FSP FAS 157-2, *Effective Date of FASB Statement No. 157* (FSP FAS 157-2) effective January 1, 2008. SFAS 157 establishes a framework for measuring fair value. That framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value.

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

5. Fair Value Measurements (continued)

The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (level 1 measurements) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (level 3 measurements). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy under SFAS 157 are described as follows:

Level 1: Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the Plan has the ability to access.

Level 2: Inputs to the valuation methodology include

quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets;

quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets;

inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability;

inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means.

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3: Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

The asset or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques used need to maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

Following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at December 31, 2008, and 2007.

Common stocks, corporate bonds and U.S. government securities: Valued at the closing price reported on the active market on which the individual securities are traded.

Mutual funds: Valued at the net asset value (NAV) of shares held by the Plan at year end based on the closing price reported on the active market on which the shares are traded.

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

5. Fair Value Measurements (continued)

Collective Investment Funds: Valued at quoted prices for similar assets on the active market on which the underlying securities are traded.

Participant loans: Valued at amortized cost, which approximates fair value.

The preceding methods described may produce a fair value calculation that may not be indicative of net realizable value or reflective of future fair values. Furthermore, although the Plan believes its valuation methods are appropriate and consistent with other market participants, the use of different methodologies or assumptions to determine the fair value of certain financial instruments could result in a different fair value measurement at the reporting date.

The following table sets forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Plan's assets at fair value as of December 31, 2008:

	Assets at Fair Value as of December 31, 2008			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Mutual funds	\$ 17,139,033	\$	\$	\$ 17,139,033
Common stocks	18,684,999			18,684,999
Collective investment funds		19,823,906		19,823,906
Participant loans			4,220,501	4,220,501
Total assets at fair value	\$ 35,824,032	\$ 19,823,906	\$ 4,220,501	\$ 59,868,439

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

5. Fair Value Measurements (continued)**Level 3 Gains and Losses**

The following sets forth a summary of changes in the fair value of the Plan's level 3 assets for the year ended December 31, 2008.

	Level 3 Assets Year Ended December 31, 2008
	<i>(Participant loans)</i>
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 3,943,124
Issuances, repayments, and settlements (net)	277,377
Balance, end of year	\$ 4,220,501

6. Income Tax Status

The Plan has received a determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service dated January 27, 2009, stating that the Plan is qualified under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code) and, therefore, the related trust is exempt from taxation. Once qualified, the Plan is required to operate in conformity with the Code to maintain its qualified status. The plan administrator believes the Plan is qualified and the related trust is tax-exempt.

7. Party-in-Interest Transactions

Participants may direct investment of their Plan balance into the AdviceTrack program where Wachovia, the Plan trustee, is responsible for managing the investments in Participant accounts. These transactions qualify as party-in-interest transactions. AdviceTrack investments utilize the following funds:

Enhanced Stock Market of Wachovia

Diversified Bond Group Trust of Wachovia

Stable Investment Fund of Wachovia

Pimco Real Return Fund Inst

Pimco High Yield Fund Inst

JP Morgan High Yield Fund

American Century Small Company I

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

7. Party-in-Interest Transactions (continued)

T Rowe Price Real Estate Fund

Evergreen Select Strategic Growth I

T Rowe Price Equity Income

The Boston Company Small Cap Value I

Alger Small Cap Inst

Goldman Sachs Large Value Fund

T Rowe Price Growth Fund

Dreyfus Premier Small Cap Equity Fund

Pimco Total Return Inst

Evergreen International Bond Fund I

Evergreen International Equity I

Lazard Emerging Markets Fund

Due to restrictions on the trading periods of the Ingles stock, effective May 2007, the Plan Sponsor may advance funds to the Plan for the purpose of making distributions of participants' holdings in the Ingles Stock Fund. Advances are interest free and will be repaid through the dividends received on the Ingles Class B stock and, if necessary, the conversion of the Ingles Class B stock to Class A stock and subsequent market sale of the Class A shares. During 2008, the Plan Sponsor advanced a total of \$750,000 to the Plan. All loans were repaid by the Plan at the end of the Plan year.

8. Risks and Uncertainties

The Plan invests in various investment securities. Investment securities are exposed to various risks such as interest rate, market, and credit risks. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investment securities, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the values of investment securities will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect participants' account balances and the amounts reported in the statement of net assets available for benefits. Because the Ingles Stock Fund - Class B and the Ingles Class A Stock Fund are not diversified, they may experience wider variation in value than the other Plan funds.

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Supplemental Schedules

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Schedule H, Line 4a Schedule of Delinquent Participant Contributions

EIN #56-0846267 Plan #001

Year Ended December 31, 2008

	Total that Constitute
Participant Contributions	Nonexempt Prohibited
Transferred Late to Plan	Transactions
\$2,799	\$2,799 (1)

- (1) Represents delinquent loan repayments. The Company remitted lost earnings to the Plan and will file Form 5330, Return of Excise Taxes Related to Employee Benefit Plans.

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Ingles Markets, Incorporated Investment/Profit Sharing Plan

Schedule H, Line 4i Schedule of Assets (Held at End of Year)

EIN #56-0846267 Plan #001

December 31, 2008

(a)	(b) Identity of Issue, Borrower, Lessor or Similar Party	(c) Description of Investment, Including Maturity Date, Rate of Interest, Collateral, Par or Maturity Value	(d) Cost **	(e) Current Value
	Collective Trust Funds:			
*	Wachovia Bank, N.A.	Wachovia Diversified Stable Value Fund ***		\$ 14,979,715
*	Wachovia Bank, N.A.	Enhanced Stock Market Fund of Wachovia		5,046,622
*	Wachovia Bank, N.A.	Diversified Bond Group Trust of Wachovia		435,046
*	Wachovia Bank, N.A.	Stable Investment Fund of Wachovia ***		174,187
				20,635,570
	Mutual Funds:			
*	Wachovia Bank, N.A.	Evergreen Short Intermediate Bond Fund Class I		161,710
	American Beacon Advisors, Inc.	American Beacon Large Cap Value		393,974
	Columbia Wanger Asset Mgmt	Columbia Acorn FD CL Z		989,004
	Goldman Sachs	Goldman Sachs Large Value Fund		507,270
	American Funds	American Funds Growth Fund of America Class A		921,600
	Dreyfus	Dreyfus MidCap Index Fund, Inc.		1,829,191
	Dreyfus	Dreyfus Premier Small Cap Equity Fund Class I		168,809
	PIMCO	Pimco Real Return Fund Inst		214,926
	PIMCO	Pimco High Yield Fund Inst		43,364
	PIMCO	Pimco Total Return Instl		497,412
	JP Morgan Investment Advisors	JP Morgan High Yield Fund		252,228
	American Century	American Century Small Company I		1,692
	T. Rowe Price	T Rowe Price Real Estate Fund		144,912
	T. Rowe Price	T Rowe Price Growth Fund		447,046
*	Wachovia Bank, N.A.	Evergreen Strategic Growth I		323,432
	T. Rowe Price	T Rowe Price Equity Income		414,955

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Copies of such material can also be obtained at prescribed rates by writing to the Public Reference Section of the Commission at 100 F. Street, N.E., Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549. The Commission maintains a Web site that contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information regarding registrants including the Company that file electronically at <http://www.sec.gov>. In addition, reports and other material concerning the Company can be inspected at the offices of the New York Stock Exchange, 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005, on which Exchange certain of the Company's securities are listed.

No separate financial statements of any Trust are included in this Prospectus. The Company considers that such statements would not be material to holders of the Preferred Securities because each Trust has no independent operations and exists for the sole purpose of investing the proceeds of the sale of its Trust Securities (as defined below) in Junior Subordinated Notes.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The following documents have been filed with the Commission pursuant to the 1934 Act and are incorporated by reference in this Prospectus and made a part of this Prospectus:

- (a) the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2004;
- (b) the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2005; and
- (c) the Company's Current Reports on Form 8-K dated February 21, 2005, March 8, 2005, May 5, 2005 and June 10, 2005.

All documents filed by the Company with the Commission pursuant to Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the 1934 Act subsequent to the date of the initial filing of the Registration Statement and prior to the effectiveness of the Registration Statement and subsequent to the date of this Prospectus and prior to the termination of this offering shall be deemed to be incorporated in this Prospectus by reference and made a part of this Prospectus from the date of filing of such documents; provided, however, the Company is not incorporating any information furnished under Items 2.02 or 7.01 of any Current Report on Form 8-K unless specifically stated otherwise. Any statement contained in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this Prospectus shall be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this Prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this Prospectus or in any other subsequently filed document which also is or is deemed to be incorporated by reference in this Prospectus modifies or supersedes such statement. Any statement so modified or superseded shall not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this Prospectus.

The Company will provide without charge to each person to whom this Prospectus is delivered, on the written or oral request of any such person, a copy of any or all documents incorporated in this Prospectus by reference (other than the exhibits to such documents unless such exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference). Such requests should be directed to William E. Zales, Jr., Vice President and Corporate Secretary, Alabama Power Company, 600 North 18th Street, Birmingham, Alabama 35291, telephone: (205) 257-2714.

Table of Contents**ALABAMA POWER COMPANY**

The Company is a corporation organized under the laws of the State of Alabama on November 10, 1927, by the consolidation of the predecessor Alabama Power Company, Gulf Electric Company and Houston Power Company. The predecessor Alabama Power Company had a continuous existence since its incorporation in 1906. The principal executive offices of the Company are located at 600 North 18th Street, Birmingham, Alabama 35291, and the telephone number is (205) 257-1000.

The Company is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Southern Company, a holding company registered under the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935, as amended (the 1935 Act). The Company is engaged, within the State of Alabama, in the generation and purchase of electricity and the distribution and sale of such electricity at retail in over 1,000 communities (including Anniston, Birmingham, Gadsden, Mobile, Montgomery and Tuscaloosa), and at wholesale to 15 municipally owned electric distribution systems, 11 of which are served indirectly through sales to the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority, and two rural distributing cooperative associations. The Company also supplies steam service in downtown Birmingham. The Company owns coal reserves near its Gorgas Steam Electric Generating Plant and uses the output of coal from the reserves in its generating plants. It also sells, and cooperates with dealers in promoting the sale of, electric appliances.

The Company and one of its affiliates, Georgia Power Company (GEORGIA), each own 50% of the common stock of Southern Electric Generating Company (SEGCO). SEGCO owns generating units with an aggregate capacity of 1,019,680 kilowatts at the Ernest C. Gaston Steam Plant (Plant Gaston) on the Coosa River near Wilsonville, Alabama. The Company and GEORGIA are each entitled to one-half of the capacity and energy of these units. The Company acts as SEGCO 's agent in the operation of SEGCO 's units and furnishes coal to SEGCO as fuel for its units. SEGCO also owns three 230,000 volt transmission lines extending from Plant Gaston to the Georgia state line.

SELECTED INFORMATION

The following material, which is presented in this Prospectus solely to furnish limited introductory information regarding the Company, has been selected from, or is based upon, the detailed information and financial statements appearing in the documents incorporated in this Prospectus by reference or elsewhere in this Prospectus, is qualified in its entirety by reference to such documents and, therefore, should be read together with those documents.

Alabama Power Company

Business	Generation, transmission, distribution and sale of electric energy
Service Area	Approximately 45,000 square miles comprising most of the State of Alabama
Customers at December 31, 2004	1,385,374
Generating Capacity at December 31, 2004 (kilowatts)	12,215,743
Sources of Generation during 2004 (kilowatt-hours)	Coal (65%), Nuclear (19%), Gas (10%), Hydro (6%)

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The following table sets forth the Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges and Earnings to Fixed Charges Plus Preferred Dividend Requirements (Pre-Income Tax Basis) for the periods indicated.

	Year Ended December 31,					Three Months Ended March 31, 2005(1)
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges(2)	3.46	3.31	3.98	4.29	4.76	3.15
Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges Plus Preferred Dividend Requirements (Pre-Income Tax Basis)(3)	3.18	3.05	3.66	3.83	4.06	2.78

- (1) Due to seasonal variations in the demand for energy, operating results for the three months ended March 31, 2005 do not necessarily indicate operating results for the entire year.
- (2) This ratio is computed as follows: (i) Earnings have been calculated by adding to Earnings Before Income Taxes Interest expense, net of amounts capitalized, Interest expense to affiliate trusts, Distributions on mandatorily redeemable preferred securities and the debt portion of allowance for funds used during construction; and (ii) Fixed Charges consist of Interest expense, net of amounts capitalized, Interest expense to affiliate trusts, Distributions on mandatorily redeemable preferred securities and the debt portion of allowance for funds used during construction.
- (3) In computing this ratio, Preferred Dividend Requirements represent the before-tax earnings necessary to pay such dividends, computed at the effective tax rates for the applicable periods.

THE TRUSTS

Each Trust is a statutory trust created under Delaware law pursuant to the filing of a certificate of trust with the Delaware Secretary of State on October 21, 2002. Each Trust's business is defined in a trust agreement, executed by the Company, as Depositor, and the Delaware Trustee of each Trust. This trust agreement of each Trust will be amended and restated in its entirety substantially in the form filed as an exhibit to the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus forms a part (the Trust Agreement). Each Trust Agreement will be qualified as an indenture under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended (the 1939 Act). The Company will own all the common securities (the Common Securities) and, together with the Preferred Securities, the Trust Securities). The Trust Securities represent undivided beneficial interests in the assets of the respective Trusts. Each Trust exists for the exclusive purposes of (i) issuing its Trust Securities representing undivided beneficial interests in the assets of such Trust, (ii) investing the gross proceeds of its Trust Securities in a related series of Junior Subordinated Notes, and (iii) engaging in only those other activities necessary, appropriate, convenient or incidental to these purposes. The payment of periodic cash distributions on the Preferred Securities of each Trust and payments on liquidation and redemption with respect to the Preferred Securities of each Trust, in each case to the extent each Trust has funds legally and immediately available for these purposes, will be guaranteed by the Company (individually, a Guarantee and collectively, the Guarantees). See Description of the Guarantees.

Each Trust's business and affairs will be conducted by its trustees, which shall be appointed by the Company as the holder of the Common Securities: two employees of the Company as Administrative Trustees; JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. (formerly known as The Chase Manhattan Bank) as Property Trustee; and Chase Bank USA, National Association as Delaware Trustee (collectively, the Securities Trustees). The Property Trustee of each Trust will act as the indenture trustee with respect to such Trust for purposes of compliance with the provisions of the 1939 Act.

The principal place of business of each Trust shall be c/o the Company, 600 North 18th Street, Birmingham, Alabama 35291, telephone (205) 257-2714, Attn: Corporate Secretary.

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Reference is made to the Prospectus Supplement relating to the Preferred Securities of each Trust for further information concerning such Trust.

ACCOUNTING TREATMENT OF THE TRUSTS

For financial reporting purposes, each Trust is a variable interest entity. The Company does not meet the definition of primary beneficiary and, therefore, accounts for its investment in each Trust under the equity method in accordance with Financial Accounting Standards Board Interpretation No. 46R, Consolidation of Variable Interest Entities. The Junior Subordinated Notes payable to each Trust will be presented as a separate line item in the Company's balance sheet. Interest related to the Junior Subordinated Notes will be reflected as a separate line item on the Company's income statement and appropriate disclosures concerning the Preferred Securities, the Guarantees and the Junior Subordinated Notes will be included in the notes to the Company's financial statements.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Each Trust will invest the proceeds received from the sale of its Preferred Securities in Junior Subordinated Notes. Except as may be otherwise described in an applicable Prospectus Supplement, the net proceeds received by the Company from such investment and any proceeds received from the sale of its new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares or Senior Notes or other sales of its Junior Subordinated Notes will be used in connection with its ongoing construction program, to pay scheduled maturities and/or refundings of its securities, to repay short-term indebtedness to the extent outstanding and for other general corporate purposes.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW BONDS

Set forth below is a description of the general terms of the Company's new Bonds. The following description does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and is qualified by reference to, the Indenture, dated as of January 1, 1942, between the Company and JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. (formerly known as The Chase Manhattan Bank (as successor to Chemical Bank and Trust Company)), as trustee (the First Mortgage Bond Trustee), as to be supplemented by a supplemental indenture (the Supplemental Indenture) establishing the new Bonds of each series (the Indenture, as so supplemented, is referred to as the First Mortgage Bond Indenture), the forms of which are filed as exhibits to the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus forms a part. The terms of such new Bonds will include those stated in the First Mortgage Bond Indenture and those made a part of the First Mortgage Bond Indenture by reference to the 1939 Act. Certain capitalized terms used in this Prospectus are defined in the First Mortgage Bond Indenture.

The new Bonds will mature on the date shown in their title as set forth in the Prospectus Supplement.

The new Bonds in definitive form will be issued only as registered bonds without coupons in denominations of \$1,000 or authorized multiples of \$1,000 or in such other denominations as set forth in the Prospectus Supplement. New Bonds will be exchangeable for a like aggregate principal amount of new Bonds of other authorized denominations, and are transferable, at the principal corporate trust office of the First Mortgage Bond Trustee in New York City, or at such other office or agency of the Company as the Company may from time to time designate, without payment of any charge other than for any tax or taxes or other governmental charge.

Any proposed listing of the new Bonds on a securities exchange will be described in the Prospectus Supplement.

Except as otherwise may be indicated in the Prospectus Supplement, there are no provisions of the First Mortgage Bond Indenture which are specifically intended to afford holders of the new Bonds protection in the event of a highly leveraged transaction involving the Company.

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Interest Rate Provisions: The Prospectus Supplement will set forth the interest rate provisions of the new Bonds, including payment dates, the record dates and the rate or rates, or the method of determining the rate or rates (which may involve periodic interest rate settings through remarketing or auction procedures or pursuant to one or more formulae, as described in the Prospectus Supplement).

Redemption Provisions: The redemption provisions applicable to the new Bonds will be described in the Prospectus Supplement.

Priority and Security: The new Bonds will rank equally as to security with the bonds of other series presently outstanding under the First Mortgage Bond Indenture, which is a direct first lien on substantially all of the Company's fixed property and franchises, used or useful in its public utility business, subject only to excepted encumbrances, as defined in the First Mortgage Bond Indenture (Section 1.02).

The First Mortgage Bond Indenture permits, within certain limitations specified in Section 7.05, the acquisition of property subject to prior liens. Under certain conditions specified in Section 7.14, additional indebtedness secured by such prior liens may be issued to the extent of 60% of the cost to the Company or the fair value at date of acquisition, whichever is less, of the net property additions made by the Company to the property subject to such prior lien.

Replacement Requirement: By Section 4 of the Supplemental Indenture dated as of October 1, 1981, the Company is required to certify to the First Mortgage Bond Trustee unfunded net property additions or to deposit with the First Mortgage Bond Trustee cash or bonds in an amount equal to the amount by which annual expenditures for renewals and replacements are less than 2.25% of the average annual amount of depreciable mortgaged property or such revised percentage as shall be authorized or approved by the Commission, or any successor commission, under the 1935 Act. Any available replacement credit may be carried forward and deposited cash or bonds may be withdrawn, used or applied in accordance with the provisions of such Section 4.

Any limitation on the right of the Company to redeem new Bonds through the operation of the replacement provisions of the First Mortgage Bond Indenture will be described in the Prospectus Supplement.

The First Mortgage Bond Indenture (Section 7.16) provides for an examination of the mortgaged property by an independent engineer at least once every five years. The Company covenants to make good any maintenance deficiency shown by the certificate of such engineer and to record retirements as called for by the First Mortgage Bond Indenture.

Issuance of Additional Bonds: Additional bonds may be issued under the First Mortgage Bond Indenture (a) under Article IV to the extent of 60% of the cost or fair value at date of acquisition, whichever is less, of unfunded net property additions, as defined in the First Mortgage Bond Indenture (Sections 1.08 through 1.11, as amended), or (b) under Article V against the retirement of other bonds outstanding under the First Mortgage Bond Indenture, or (c) under Article VI against the deposit of cash equal to the principal amount of bonds to be issued. Such additional bonds, however, may be issued, except in certain cases when issued under Article V, only if, for a period of twelve consecutive calendar months within the fifteen preceding calendar months, the net earnings of the Company, as defined in the First Mortgage Bond Indenture (Section 1.03, as amended), shall have been at least twice the interest requirements for one year on all bonds outstanding, including the additional bonds applied for and all outstanding prior lien bonds and other indebtedness of the character described in the First Mortgage Bond Indenture. Such net earnings are computed, in effect, after making certain deductions including (i) all operating expenses other than income and excess profits taxes and (ii) the amount, if any, by which the aggregate charges to expense or income to provide for depreciation are less than 2.25% of the average amount of depreciable mortgaged property. Under this provision, no amount is included in interest requirements on account of \$18,700,000 principal amount of first mortgage bonds (out of a total of \$132,900,000 principal amount) issued and outstanding as of March 31, 2005, as collateral for certain obligations for which such bonds are pledged as security. No interest is payable on any such bonds unless and until default occurs on such obligations.

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Cash deposited as the basis for the issuance of bonds may be applied to the retirement of bonds or be withdrawn against the deposit of bonds or be withdrawn to the extent of 60% of the cost or fair value, whichever is less, of unfunded net property additions (Article VI).

Release and Substitution of Property: The First Mortgage Bond Indenture (Article X) provides that, subject to various limitations, property may be released from the lien of the First Mortgage Bond Indenture when sold or exchanged, upon the basis of cash deposited with the First Mortgage Bond Trustee, bonds or purchase money obligations delivered to the First Mortgage Bond Trustee, prior lien bonds delivered to the First Mortgage Bond Trustee or reduced or assumed, property additions acquired in exchange for the property released or unfunded net property additions certified to the First Mortgage Bond Trustee.

The First Mortgage Bond Indenture (Section 10.05) permits the cash proceeds of released property and other funds to be withdrawn either upon a showing that unfunded net property additions exist or against the deposit of bonds and also permits such proceeds and other funds to be applied to the retirement of bonds.

Restrictions on Common Stock Dividends: There are various restrictions on Common Stock dividends in the First Mortgage Bond Indenture (which are to remain in effect so long as certain series of bonds are outstanding). Any restrictions on dividends and distributions on Common Stock in the Supplemental Indenture will be set forth in the Prospectus Supplement.

Amendments to the First Mortgage Bond Indenture: By Section 6(g) of the Supplemental Indenture dated as of October 1, 1981, the First Mortgage Bond Indenture may be modified with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the bonds at the time outstanding which would be affected by the action proposed to be taken. However, the bondholders shall have no power (i) to extend the fixed maturity of any bonds, or reduce the rate or extend the time of payment of interest on any bonds, or reduce the principal amount of any bonds, without the express consent of the holder of each bond which would be so affected, or (ii) to reduce the percentage of bonds as mentioned above, the holders of which are required to consent to any such modification, without the consent of the holders of all bonds outstanding, or (iii) to permit the creation by the Company of any mortgage or pledge or lien in the nature of any bonds, not otherwise permitted under the First Mortgage Bond Indenture, ranking prior to or equal with the lien of the First Mortgage Bond Indenture on any of the mortgaged and pledged property, or (iv) to deprive the holder of any bond outstanding under the First Mortgage Bond Indenture of the lien of the First Mortgage Bond Indenture on any of the mortgaged and pledged property. The First Mortgage Bond Trustee shall not be obligated to enter into a supplemental indenture which would affect its own rights, duties or immunities under the First Mortgage Bond Indenture or otherwise.

Regarding the First Mortgage Bond Trustee: JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., the First Mortgage Bond Trustee, also serves as Senior Note Indenture Trustee, as Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, as Property Trustee and as Guarantee Trustee. The Company and certain of its affiliates maintain deposit accounts and banking relationships with JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. also serves as trustee under other indentures pursuant to which securities of the Company and affiliates of the Company are outstanding.

Enforcement Provisions: The First Mortgage Bond Indenture (Section 11.05) provides that, upon the occurrence of certain events of default, the First Mortgage Bond Trustee or the holders of not less than 20% in principal amount of outstanding bonds may declare the principal of all outstanding bonds immediately due and payable, but that, upon the curing of any such default, the holders of a majority in principal amount of outstanding bonds may waive such default and its consequences.

The holders of a majority in principal amount of outstanding bonds may direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for the enforcement of the First Mortgage Bond Indenture (Sections 11.01 and 11.12). No holder of any bond has any right to institute any proceedings to enforce the First Mortgage Bond Indenture or any remedy under the First Mortgage Bond Indenture, unless such holder shall previously have given to the First Mortgage Bond Trustee written notice of a default, and unless such holder or holders shall have tendered to the First Mortgage Bond Trustee indemnity against costs, expenses and liabilities, and unless the holders of not less than 20% in principal amount of outstanding bonds shall have tendered such

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indemnity and requested the First Mortgage Bond Trustee to take action and the First Mortgage Bond Trustee shall have failed to take action within 60 days (Section 11.14).

Defaults: By Section 11.01 of the First Mortgage Bond Indenture, the following events are defined as defaults : failure to pay principal; failure for 60 days to pay interest; failure for 90 days to pay any sinking or other purchase fund installment; certain events in bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization; and failure for 90 days after notice to perform other covenants. By Section 9.03 of the First Mortgage Bond Indenture, a failure by the Company to deposit or direct the application of money for the redemption of bonds called for redemption also constitutes a default.

Evidence as to Compliance with Conditions and Covenants: The First Mortgage Bond Indenture requires the Company to furnish to the First Mortgage Bond Trustee, among other things, a certificate of officers and an opinion of counsel as evidence of compliance with conditions precedent provided for in the First Mortgage Bond Indenture; a certificate of an engineer (who, in certain instances, must be an independent engineer) with respect to the fair value of property certified or released; and a certificate of an accountant (who, in certain instances, must be an independent public accountant) as to compliance with the earnings and replacement requirements. Various certificates and other documents are required to be filed periodically or upon the happening of certain events; however, no general periodic evidence is required by the First Mortgage Bond Indenture to be furnished as to the absence of default or as to compliance with the terms of the First Mortgage Bond Indenture in general.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW STOCK

Set forth below is a description of the general terms of the new Stock. The statements in this Prospectus concerning the new Stock are an outline and do not purport to be complete. Such statements make use of defined terms and are qualified in their entirety by express reference to the cited provisions of the charter of the Company, as amended (the charter), a copy of which is filed as an exhibit to the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus forms a part. The general provisions which apply to the preferred stock of the Company of all classes, which are now or may at a later time be authorized or created, are set forth in the charter.

General: The new Stock is to be established by resolutions of the Board of Directors of the Company (the Resolutions), a copy of which is an exhibit to the Registration Statement (or incorporated by reference). The Resolutions shall include a provision fixing the stated capital of the new Stock.

At March 31, 2005, there were outstanding 12,000,000 shares of Class A Preferred Stock with a stated capital of \$25 per share and 1,250 shares of Flexible Money Market Class A Preferred Stock with a stated capital of \$100,000 per share. Additionally, at March 31, 2005, the Company had outstanding 475,115 shares of Preferred Stock which have a par value of \$100 per share. The Class A Preferred Stock ranks on a parity as to dividends and assets with the outstanding Preferred Stock and has the same general rights and preferences as the outstanding Preferred Stock. On all matters submitted to a vote of the holders of the Preferred Stock and the Class A Preferred Stock (other than a change in the rights and preferences of only one, but not the other, such kind of stock), both kinds of stock vote together as a single class, and each share of Preferred Stock and Class A Preferred Stock shall have the relative voting rights described in Voting Rights in this Prospectus.

The new Stock will not be subject to further calls or to assessment by the Company.

Any proposed listing of the new Stock on a securities exchange will be described in the Prospectus Supplement.

Transfer Agent and Registrar: Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable Prospectus Supplement, the new Stock will be transferable at the office of Southern Company Services, Inc., 270 Peachtree Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303, which will also serve as the Registrar.

Dividend Rights: The holders of the Preferred Stock and Class A Preferred Stock of each class are entitled to receive cumulative dividends, payable when and as declared by the Board of Directors, at the rates

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determined for the respective classes, before any dividends may be declared or paid on the Preference Stock or the Common Stock. Dividends on the Preferred Stock and Class A Preferred Stock must have been or be contemporaneously declared and set apart for payment, or paid, on the Preferred Stock and Class A Preferred Stock of all classes for all dividend periods terminating on the same or an earlier date (Charter A. Preferred Stock 2. General Provisions a and b).

The Prospectus Supplement will set forth the dividend rate provisions of the new Stock, including the payment dates and the rate or rates, or the method of determining the rate or rates (which may involve periodic dividend rate settings through remarketing or auction procedures or pursuant to one or more formulae, as described in the Prospectus Supplement). Dividends payable on the new Stock will be cumulative from the date of original issue.

Redemption Provisions: The redemption provisions applicable to the new Stock will be described in the Prospectus Supplement.

The charter provides that the Company shall not redeem, purchase or otherwise acquire any shares of Preferred Stock or Class A Preferred Stock if, at the time of such redemption, purchase or other acquisition, dividends payable on the Preferred Stock or Class A Preferred Stock of any class shall be in default in whole or in part unless, prior to or concurrently with such redemption, purchase or other acquisition, all such defaults shall be cured or unless such action has been ordered, approved or permitted under the 1935 Act by the Commission or any successor commission or regulatory authority of the United States of America (Charter A. Preferred Stock 2. General Provisions d).

Voting Rights: The voting rights applicable to the Preferred Stock and Class A Preferred Stock will be described in the Prospectus Supplement.

Liquidation Rights: Upon voluntary or involuntary liquidation, the holders of the Preferred Stock and Class A Preferred Stock of each class, without preference between classes, will be entitled to receive the amounts specified to be payable on the shares of such class (which, in the case of the new Stock, is an amount equal to the stated capital per share on involuntary liquidation, or an amount equal to the then current regular redemption price per share on voluntary liquidation, plus accrued dividends in each case) before any distribution of assets may be made to the holders of the Preference Stock or the Common Stock. Available assets, if insufficient to pay such amounts to the holders of the Preferred Stock and Class A Preferred Stock, are to be distributed pro rata to the payment, first, of the amount per share payable in the event of involuntary liquidation, second, of accrued dividends, and third, of any premium (Charter A. Preferred Stock 2. General Provisions c.).

Sinking Fund: The terms and conditions of a sinking fund or purchase fund, if any, for the benefit of the holders of the new Stock will be set forth in the Prospectus Supplement.

Other Rights: The holders of the new Stock do not have any preemptive or conversion rights unless otherwise indicated in the Prospectus Supplement.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERENCE STOCK

Preference Stock is a proposed new class of capital stock of the Company that will rank junior to the Preferred Stock and Class A Preferred Stock and senior to the Common Stock. An amendment to the Company's charter establishing the Preference Stock is required to be submitted for adoption by the shareholders of the Company, and, if adopted, the Company will be authorized to issue Preference Stock. The Board of Directors will determine the specific terms, rights, preferences, limitations and restrictions of each series of Preference Stock and such provisions will be included in a subsequent amendment to the Company's charter for each series. The Prospectus Supplement for a series of Preference Stock will describe the terms, rights, preferences, limitations and restrictions of the Preference Stock offered by that Prospectus Supplement. A copy of such amendments to the Company's charter will be filed as exhibits to the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus forms a part.

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The terms, rights, preferences, limitations and restrictions of the Preference Stock to be determined and set forth in the applicable Prospectus Supplement include the following: (i) the total number of shares of Preference Stock authorized to be issued, (ii) the designation of the series; (iii) the total number of shares of a series being offered; (iv) the general or special voting rights of such shares, if any; (v) the price or prices at which shares will be offered and sold; (vi) the dividend rate, period and payment date or method of calculation applicable to the Preference Stock; (vii) the date from which dividends on the Preference Stock accumulate, if applicable; (viii) the mandatory or optional sinking fund, purchase fund or similar provisions, if any; (ix) the dates, prices and other terms of any optional or mandatory redemption; (x) the relative ranking and preferences of the Preference Stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation (whether voluntary or involuntary), dissolution or winding up of the Company's affairs; (xi) the procedures for auction and remarketing, if any, of the shares; (xi) any listing of the shares on a securities exchange; and (xii) any other specific terms, preferences, rights, limitations or restrictions.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DEPOSITARY SHARES

Set forth below is a description of the general terms of the Depositary Shares. The statements in this Prospectus concerning the Depositary Shares and the Deposit Agreement (as defined below) are an outline and do not purport to be complete. Such statements make use of defined terms and are qualified in their entirety by express reference to the Deposit Agreement (which contains the form of Depositary Receipt (as defined below)), a form of which is an exhibit to the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus forms a part or incorporated by reference to the Registration Statement.

General: The Company may, at its option, elect to offer Depositary Shares. Each Depositary Share will represent a fraction of a share of Preference Stock as described in the Prospectus Supplement. The shares of Preference Stock represented by the Depositary Shares will be deposited under a Deposit Agreement (the "Deposit Agreement"), among the Company, the Depositary named in the Deposit Agreement (the "Depositary") and all holders from time to time of the depositary receipts (the "Depositary Receipts") issued under the Deposit Agreement. Subject to the terms of the Deposit Agreement, each owner of a Depositary Share is entitled, proportionately, to all the rights, preferences and privileges of the Preference Stock (including dividend, voting and liquidation rights) and subject, proportionately, to all of the limitations of the Preference Stock contained in the charter summarized under "Description of the Preference Stock" in this Prospectus. The Depositary Shares are evidenced by Depositary Receipts issued pursuant to the Deposit Agreement.

Any proposed listing of the Depositary Shares on a securities exchange will be described in the Prospectus Supplement.

Issuance of Depositary Receipts: Immediately following the issuance of the Preference Stock, the Company will deposit the Preference Stock with the Depositary, which will then execute and deliver the Depositary Receipts to the Company. The Company will, in turn, deliver the Depositary Receipts to the underwriters or purchasers. Depositary Receipts will be issued evidencing only whole Depositary Shares.

Withdrawal of Preference Stock: Upon surrender of Depositary Receipts at the corporate trust office of the Depositary, the owner of the Depositary Shares evidenced by such Depositary Receipts is entitled to delivery at such office of certificates evidencing the number of shares of Preference Stock (but only in whole shares of Preference Stock) represented by such Depositary Shares. If the Depositary Receipts delivered by the holder evidence a number of Depositary Shares in excess of the number of whole shares of Preference Stock to be withdrawn, the Depositary will deliver to such holder at the same time a new Depositary Receipt evidencing such excess number of Depositary Shares. The Company does not expect that there will be any public trading market for the Preference Stock, except as represented by the Depositary Shares.

Redemption of Depositary Shares: The Depositary Shares will be redeemed, upon not less than 15 nor more than 60 days' notice, using the cash proceeds received by the Depositary resulting from the redemption, in whole or in part, at the Company's option, but subject to the applicable terms and conditions, of shares of Preference Stock held by the Depositary. The redemption price per Depositary Share will be equal to the

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fraction of the redemption price per share applicable to the Preference Stock. Whenever the Company redeems shares of the Preference Stock held by the Depositary, the Depositary will redeem as of the same redemption date the number of Depositary Shares representing the shares of Preference Stock so redeemed. If less than all the outstanding Depositary Shares are to be redeemed, the Depositary Shares to be redeemed will be selected pro rata (as nearly as may be) or by lot or by such other equitable method as the Depositary may determine.

Dividends and Other Distributions: The Depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions received in respect of Preference Stock to the record holders of Depositary Receipts in proportion, insofar as practicable, to the number of Depositary Shares owned by such holders. In the event of a distribution other than in cash, the Depositary will distribute property received by it to the record holders of Depositary Receipts entitled to such property, unless the Depositary determines that it is not feasible to make such distribution, in which case the Depositary may, with the approval of the Company, adopt such method as it deems equitable and practicable for the purpose of effecting such distribution, including the sale (at public or private sale) of such property and distribution of the net proceeds from such sale to such holders. The amount distributed in any of the foregoing cases will be reduced by any amounts required to be withheld by the Company or the Depositary on account of taxes or otherwise required pursuant to law, regulation or court process.

Record Date: Whenever (i) any cash dividend or other cash distribution shall become payable, any distribution other than cash shall be made, or any rights, preferences or privileges shall be offered with respect to the Preference Stock or (ii) the Depositary shall receive notice of any meeting at which holders of Preference Stock are entitled to vote or of which holders of Preference Stock are entitled to notice, the Depositary shall in each such instance fix a record date (which shall be the record date fixed by the Company with respect to the Preference Stock) for the determination of the holders of Depositary Receipts who shall be entitled to (y) receive such dividend, distribution, rights, preferences or privileges or the net proceeds of such sale or (z) give instructions for the exercise of voting rights at such meeting or receive notice of such meeting.

Voting Preference Stock: Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of Preference Stock are entitled to vote, the Depositary will mail the information contained in such notice of meeting to the record holders of Depositary Receipts. The record holders of Depositary Receipts on the record date (which will be the same date as the record date for the Preference Stock) will be entitled to instruct the Depositary as to the exercise of the voting rights pertaining to the amount of Preference Stock represented by their respective Depositary Receipts. The Depositary will endeavor insofar as practicable to vote or cause to be voted the amount of Preference Stock represented by such Depositary Receipts in accordance with such instructions, and the Company has agreed to take all action which may be deemed necessary by the Depositary in order to enable the Depositary to do so. The Depositary will abstain from voting the Preference Stock to the extent it does not receive specific instructions from the holders of the Depositary Receipts.

Amendment and Termination of Deposit Agreement: The form of the Depositary Receipts and any provisions of the Deposit Agreement may at any time and from time to time be amended or modified in any respect by agreement between the Company and the Depositary. Any amendment which imposes any fees or charges (other than taxes, fees and charges provided for in the Deposit Agreement) on the holders of Depositary Receipts, or which otherwise prejudices any substantial existing right of holders of Depositary Receipts, will not become effective as to outstanding Depositary Receipts until the expiration of 90 days after notice of such amendment shall have been given to the record holders of outstanding Depositary Receipts. Every holder of an outstanding Depositary Receipt at the time any such amendment so becomes effective shall be deemed, by continuing to hold such Depositary Receipt, to consent and agree to such amendment and to be bound by the Deposit Agreement as amended. In no event may any amendment impair the right of the holder of any Depositary Receipt, subject to the conditions of the Deposit Agreement, to surrender such Depositary Receipt and receive the Preference Stock represented by such Depositary Receipt, except in order to comply with mandatory provisions of applicable law.

Whenever so directed by the Company, the Depositary will terminate the Deposit Agreement by mailing notice of such termination to the record holders of all Depositary Receipts then outstanding at least 30 days

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prior to the date fixed in such notice for such termination. The Depositary may likewise terminate the Deposit Agreement if at any time 60 days shall have expired after the Depositary shall have delivered to the Company a written notice of its election to resign and a successor depositary shall not have been appointed and accepted its appointment. If any Depositary Receipts remain outstanding after the date of termination, the Depositary will discontinue the transfer of Depositary Receipts, will suspend the distribution of dividends to the holders of Depositary Receipts and will not give any further notices (other than notice of such termination) or perform any further acts under the Deposit Agreement except that the Depositary will continue to collect dividends and other distributions pertaining to the Preference Stock and deliver Preference Stock together with such dividends and distributions and the net proceeds of any sale of any rights, preferences, privileges or other property in exchange for Depositary Receipts surrendered. At any time after the expiration of two years from the date of termination, the Depositary may sell the Preference Stock then held by it at public or private sale at such place or places and upon such terms as its deems proper and may thereafter hold the net proceeds of any such sale, together with any other cash then held by it, without liability for interest, for the pro rata benefit of the holders of Depositary Receipts which have not been surrendered. Any such moneys unclaimed by the holders of Depositary Receipts more than two years from the date of termination of the Deposit Agreement will, upon request of the Company, be paid to it, and after such payment, the holders of Depositary Receipts entitled to the funds so paid to the Company shall look only to the Company for payment without interest. The Company does not intend to terminate the Deposit Agreement or to permit the resignation of the Depositary without appointing a successor depositary.

Charges of Depositary: The Company will pay all charges of the Depositary including charges for the initial deposit of the Preference Stock and delivery of Depositary Receipts and withdrawals of Preference Stock by the holders of Depositary Receipts, except for taxes (including transfer taxes, if any) and such charges as are expressly provided in the Deposit Agreement to be at the expense of the persons depositing Preference Stock or holders of Depositary Receipts.

Miscellaneous: The Depositary will make available for inspection by holders of Depositary Receipts at its corporate trust office any reports and communications received from the Company which are made generally available to the holders of Preference Stock by the Company.

Neither the Depositary nor the Company will be liable if it is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstance beyond its control in performing its obligations under the Deposit Agreement. The obligations of the Depositary and the Company under the Deposit Agreement are limited to performance in good faith of their duties under the Deposit Agreement, and they are not obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of the Preference Stock, the Depositary Receipts or the Depositary Shares unless satisfactory indemnity is furnished. The Depositary and the Company may rely upon advice of or information from counsel, accountants or other persons believed to be competent and on documents believed to be genuine.

The Depositary may at any time resign or be removed by the Company, effective upon the acceptance by its successor of its appointment.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SENIOR NOTES

Set forth below is a description of the general terms of the Senior Notes. The following description does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to, the Senior Note Indenture, dated as of December 1, 1997, between the Company and JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. (formerly known as The Chase Manhattan Bank), as trustee (the Senior Note Indenture Trustee), as to be supplemented by a supplemental indenture establishing the Senior Notes of each series (the Senior Note Indenture, as supplemented, is referred to as the Senior Note Indenture), the forms of which are filed as exhibits to the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus forms a part. The terms of the Senior Notes will include those stated in the Senior Note Indenture and those made a part of the Senior Note Indenture by reference to the 1939 Act. Certain capitalized terms used in this Prospectus are defined in the Senior Note Indenture.

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General

The Senior Notes will be issued as unsecured senior debt securities under the Senior Note Indenture and will rank equally with all other unsecured and unsubordinated debt of the Company. The Senior Notes will be effectively subordinated to all secured debt of the Company, including its first mortgage bonds, aggregating approximately \$286,000,000 outstanding at March 31, 2005. The Senior Note Indenture does not limit the aggregate principal amount of Senior Notes that may be issued under the Senior Note Indenture and provides that Senior Notes may be issued from time to time in one or more series pursuant to an indenture supplemental to the Senior Note Indenture. The Senior Note Indenture gives the Company the ability to reopen a previous issue of Senior Notes and issue additional Senior Notes of such series, unless otherwise provided.

Reference is made to the Prospectus Supplement that will accompany this Prospectus for the following terms of the series of Senior Notes being offered by such Prospectus Supplement: (i) the title of such Senior Notes; (ii) any limit on the aggregate principal amount of such Senior Notes; (iii) the date or dates on which the principal of such Senior Notes is payable; (iv) the rate or rates at which such Senior Notes shall bear interest, if any, or any method by which such rate or rates will be determined, the date or dates from which such interest will accrue, the interest payment dates on which such interest shall be payable, and the regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date; (v) the place or places where the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest, if any, on such Senior Notes shall be payable; (vi) the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and the terms and conditions on which such Senior Notes may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at the option of the Company or at the option of the holder prior to their maturity; (vii) the obligation, if any, of the Company to redeem or purchase such Senior Notes; (viii) the denominations in which such Senior Notes shall be issuable; (ix) if other than the principal amount of such Senior Notes, the portion of the principal amount of such Senior Notes which shall be payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity of such Senior Notes; (x) any deletions from, modifications of or additions to the Events of Default or covenants of the Company as provided in the Senior Note Indenture pertaining to such Senior Notes; (xi) whether such Senior Notes shall be issued in whole or in part in the form of a Global Security; and (xii) any other terms of such Senior Notes.

The Senior Note Indenture does not contain provisions that afford holders of Senior Notes protection in the event of a highly leveraged transaction involving the Company.

Events of Default

The Senior Note Indenture provides that any one or more of the following described events with respect to the Senior Notes of any series, which has occurred and is continuing, constitutes an Event of Default with respect to the Senior Notes of such series:

(a) failure for 10 days to pay interest on the Senior Notes of such series, when due on an interest payment date other than at maturity or upon earlier redemption; or

(b) failure to pay principal or premium, if any, or interest on the Senior Notes of such series when due at maturity or upon earlier redemption; or

(c) failure for three Business Days to deposit any sinking fund payment when due by the terms of a Senior Note of such series; or

(d) failure to observe or perform any other covenant or warranty of the Company in the Senior Note Indenture (other than a covenant or warranty which has expressly been included in the Senior Note Indenture solely for the benefit of one or more series of Senior Notes other than such series) for 90 days after written notice to the Company from the Senior Note Indenture Trustee or the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the outstanding Senior Notes of such series; or

(e) certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of the Company.

The holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the Senior Notes of any series have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy

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available to the Senior Note Indenture Trustee with respect to the Senior Notes of such series. If a Senior Note Indenture Event of Default occurs and is continuing with respect to the Senior Notes of any series, then the Senior Note Indenture Trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the Senior Notes of such series may declare the principal amount of the Senior Notes due and payable immediately by notice in writing to the Company (and to the Senior Note Indenture Trustee if given by the holders), and upon any such declaration such principal amount shall become immediately due and payable. At any time after such a declaration of acceleration with respect to the Senior Notes of any series has been made and before a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained as provided in Article Five of the Senior Note Indenture, the holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the Senior Notes of such series may rescind and annul such declaration and its consequences if the default has been cured or waived and the Company has paid or deposited with the Senior Note Indenture Trustee a sum sufficient to pay all matured installments of interest and principal due otherwise than by acceleration and all sums paid or advanced by the Senior Note Indenture Trustee, including reasonable compensation and expenses of the Senior Note Indenture Trustee.

The holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the Senior Notes of any series may, on behalf of the holders of all the Senior Notes of such series, waive any past default with respect to such series, except (i) a default in the payment of principal or interest or (ii) a default in respect of a covenant or provision which under Article Nine of the Senior Note Indenture cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holder of each outstanding Senior Note of such series affected.

Registration and Transfer

The Company shall not be required to (i) issue, register the transfer of or exchange Senior Notes of any series during a period of 15 days immediately preceding the date notice is given identifying the Senior Notes of such series called for redemption, or (ii) issue, register the transfer of or exchange any Senior Notes so selected for redemption, in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any Senior Note being redeemed in part.

Payment and Paying Agent

Unless otherwise indicated in an applicable Prospectus Supplement, payment of principal of any Senior Notes will be made only against surrender to the Paying Agent of such Senior Notes. Principal of and interest on Senior Notes will be payable, subject to any applicable laws and regulations, at the office of such Paying Agent or Paying Agents as the Company may designate from time to time, except that, at the option of the Company, payment of any interest may be made by wire transfer or by check mailed to the address of the person entitled to an interest payment as such address shall appear in the Security Register with respect to the Senior Notes. Payment of interest on Senior Notes on any interest payment date will be made to the person in whose name the Senior Notes (or predecessor security) are registered at the close of business on the record date for such interest payment.

Unless otherwise indicated in an applicable Prospectus Supplement, the Senior Note Indenture Trustee will act as Paying Agent with respect to the Senior Notes. The Company may at any time designate additional Paying Agents or rescind the designation of any Paying Agents or approve a change in the office through which any Paying Agent acts.

All moneys paid by the Company to a Paying Agent for the payment of the principal of or interest on the Senior Notes of any series which remain unclaimed at the end of two years after such principal or interest shall have become due and payable will be repaid to the Company, and the holder of such Senior Notes from that time forward will look only to the Company for payment of such principal and interest.

Modification

The Senior Note Indenture contains provisions permitting the Company and the Senior Note Indenture Trustee, with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding Senior Notes of each series that is affected, to modify the Senior Note Indenture or the rights of the holders of

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the Senior Notes of such series; provided, that no such modification may, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding Senior Note that is affected, (i) change the stated maturity of the principal of, or any installment of principal of or interest on, any Senior Note, or reduce the principal amount of any Senior Note or the rate of interest on any Senior Note or any premium payable upon the redemption of any Senior Note, or change the method of calculating the rate of interest on any Senior Note, or impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any such payment on or after the stated maturity of any Senior Note (or, in the case of redemption, on or after the redemption date), or (ii) reduce the percentage of principal amount of the outstanding Senior Notes of any series, the consent of whose holders is required for any such supplemental indenture, or the consent of whose holders is required for any waiver (of compliance with certain provisions of the Senior Note Indenture or certain defaults under the Senior Note Indenture and their consequences) provided for in the Senior Note Indenture, or (iii) modify any of the provisions of the Senior Note Indenture relating to supplemental indentures, waiver of past defaults, or waiver of certain covenants, except to increase any such percentage or to provide that certain other provisions of the Senior Note Indenture cannot be modified or waived without the consent of the holder of each outstanding Senior Note that is affected.

In addition, the Company and the Senior Note Indenture Trustee may execute, without the consent of any holders of Senior Notes, any supplemental indenture for certain other usual purposes, including the creation of any new series of senior notes.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale

The Company shall not consolidate with or merge into any other corporation or convey, transfer or lease its properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person, unless (1) such other corporation or person is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the United States, any state in the United States or the District of Columbia and such other corporation or person expressly assumes, by supplemental indenture executed and delivered to the Senior Note Indenture Trustee, the payment of the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest on all the Senior Notes and the performance of every covenant of the Senior Note Indenture on the part of the Company to be performed or observed; (2) immediately after giving effect to such transactions, no Event of Default, and no event which, after notice or lapse of time or both, would become an Event of Default, shall have happened and be continuing; and (3) the Company has delivered to the Senior Note Indenture Trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel, each stating that such transaction complies with the provisions of the Senior Note Indenture governing consolidation, merger, conveyance, transfer or lease and that all conditions precedent to the transaction have been complied with.

Information Concerning the Senior Note Indenture Trustee

The Senior Note Indenture Trustee, prior to an Event of Default with respect to Senior Notes of any series, undertakes to perform, with respect to Senior Notes of such series, only such duties as are specifically set forth in the Senior Note Indenture and, in case an Event of Default with respect to Senior Notes of any series has occurred and is continuing, shall exercise, with respect to Senior Notes of such series, the same degree of care as a prudent individual would exercise in the conduct of his or her own affairs. Subject to such provision, the Senior Note Indenture Trustee is under no obligation to exercise any of the powers vested in it by the Senior Note Indenture at the request of any holder of Senior Notes of any series, unless offered reasonable indemnity by such holder against the costs, expenses and liabilities which might be incurred by the Senior Note Indenture Trustee. The Senior Note Indenture Trustee is not required to expend or risk its own funds or otherwise incur any financial liability in the performance of its duties if the Senior Note Indenture Trustee reasonably believes that repayment or adequate indemnity is not reasonably assured to it.

JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. (formerly known as The Chase Manhattan Bank), the Senior Note Indenture Trustee, also serves as First Mortgage Bond Trustee, as Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, as Property Trustee and as Guarantee Trustee. The Company and certain of its affiliates maintain deposit accounts and banking relationships with JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. also serves as trustee under other indentures pursuant to which securities of the Company and affiliates of the Company are outstanding.

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Governing Law

The Senior Note Indenture and the Senior Notes will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York.

Miscellaneous

The Company will have the right at all times to assign any of its rights or obligations under the Senior Note Indenture to a direct or indirect wholly owned subsidiary of the Company; provided, that, in the event of any such assignment, the Company will remain primarily liable for all such obligations. Subject to the foregoing, the Senior Note Indenture will be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties to the Senior Note Indenture and their respective successors and assigns.

DESCRIPTION OF THE JUNIOR SUBORDINATED NOTES

Set forth below is a description of the general terms of the Junior Subordinated Notes. The following description does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to, the Subordinated Note Indenture, dated as of January 1, 1997, between the Company and JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. (formerly known as The Chase Manhattan Bank), as trustee (the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee), as to be supplemented by a supplemental indenture to the Subordinated Note Indenture establishing the Junior Subordinated Notes of each series (the Subordinated Note Indenture, as so supplemented, is referred to as the Subordinated Note Indenture), the forms of which are filed as exhibits to the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus forms a part. The terms of the Junior Subordinated Notes will include those stated in the Subordinated Note Indenture and those made a part of the Subordinated Note Indenture by reference to the 1939 Act. Certain capitalized terms used in this Prospectus are defined in the Subordinated Note Indenture.

General

The Junior Subordinated Notes will be issued as unsecured junior subordinated debt securities under the Subordinated Note Indenture. The Subordinated Note Indenture does not limit the aggregate principal amount of Junior Subordinated Notes that may be issued under the Subordinated Note Indenture and provides that Junior Subordinated Notes may be issued from time to time in one or more series pursuant to an indenture supplemental to the Subordinated Note Indenture. The Subordinated Note Indenture gives the Company the ability to reopen a previous issue of Junior Subordinated Notes and issue additional Junior Subordinated Notes of such series, unless otherwise provided.

Reference is made to the Prospectus Supplement that will accompany this Prospectus for the following terms of the series of Junior Subordinated Notes being offered by such Prospectus Supplement: (i) the title of such Junior Subordinated Notes; (ii) any limit on the aggregate principal amount of such Junior Subordinated Notes; (iii) the date or dates on which the principal of such Junior Subordinated Notes is payable; (iv) the rate or rates at which such Junior Subordinated Notes shall bear interest, if any, or any method by which such rate or rates will be determined, the date or dates from which such interest will accrue, the interest payment dates on which such interest shall be payable, and the regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date; (v) the place or places where the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest, if any, on such Junior Subordinated Notes shall be payable; (vi) the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and the terms and conditions on which such Junior Subordinated Notes may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at the option of the Company or at the option of the holder prior to their maturity; (vii) the obligation, if any, of the Company to redeem or purchase such Junior Subordinated Notes; (viii) the denominations in which such Junior Subordinated Notes shall be issuable; (ix) if other than the principal amount of the Junior Subordinated Notes, the portion of the principal amount of such Junior Subordinated Notes which shall be payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity of the Junior Subordinated Notes; (x) any deletions from, modifications of or additions to the Events of Default or covenants of the Company as provided in the Subordinated Note Indenture pertaining to such Junior Subordinated Notes; (xi) whether such Junior Subordinated Notes shall be issued in whole or in part in the form of a Global

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Security; (xii) the right, if any, of the Company to extend the interest payment periods of such Junior Subordinated Notes; and (xiii) any other terms of such Junior Subordinated Notes. The terms of each series of Junior Subordinated Notes issued to a Trust will correspond to those of the related Preferred Securities of such Trust as described in the Prospectus Supplement relating to such Preferred Securities.

The Subordinated Note Indenture does not contain provisions that afford holders of Junior Subordinated Notes protection in the event of a highly leveraged transaction involving the Company.

Subordination

The Junior Subordinated Notes are subordinated and junior in right of payment to all Senior Indebtedness (as defined below) of the Company. No payment of principal of (including redemption payments, if any), or premium, if any, or interest on (including Additional Interest (as defined below)) the Junior Subordinated Notes may be made if (a) any Senior Indebtedness is not paid when due and any applicable grace period with respect to such default has ended with such default not being cured or waived or otherwise ceasing to exist, or (b) the maturity of any Senior Indebtedness has been accelerated because of a default, or (c) notice has been given of the exercise of an option to require repayment, mandatory payment or prepayment or otherwise. Upon any payment or distribution of assets of the Company to creditors upon any liquidation, dissolution, winding-up, reorganization, assignment for the benefit of creditors, marshalling of assets or liabilities, or any bankruptcy, insolvency or similar proceedings of the Company, the holders of Senior Indebtedness shall be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts due or to become due on or in respect of all Senior Indebtedness before the holders of the Junior Subordinated Notes are entitled to receive or retain any payment or distribution. Subject to the prior payment of all Senior Indebtedness, the rights of the holders of the Junior Subordinated Notes will be subrogated to the rights of the holders of Senior Indebtedness to receive payments and distributions applicable to such Senior Indebtedness until all amounts owing on the Junior Subordinated Notes are paid in full.

The term **Senior Indebtedness** means, with respect to the Company, (i) any payment due in respect of indebtedness of the Company, whether outstanding at the date of execution of the Subordinated Note Indenture or incurred, created or assumed after such date, (a) in respect of money borrowed (including any financial derivative, hedging or futures contract or similar instrument) and (b) evidenced by securities, debentures, bonds, notes or other similar instruments issued by the Company that, by their terms, are senior or senior subordinated debt securities including, without limitation, all obligations under its indentures with various trustees; (ii) all capital lease obligations; (iii) all obligations issued or assumed as the deferred purchase price of property, all conditional sale obligations and all obligations of the Company under any title retention agreement (but excluding trade accounts payable arising in the ordinary course of business and long-term purchase obligations); (iv) all obligations for the reimbursement of any letter of credit, banker's acceptance, security purchase facility or similar credit transaction; (v) all obligations of the type referred to in clauses (i) through (iv) above of other persons the payment of which the Company is responsible or liable as obligor, guarantor or otherwise; and (vi) all obligations of the type referred to in clauses (i) through (v) above of other persons secured by any lien on any property or asset of the Company (whether or not such obligation is assumed by the Company), except for (1) any such indebtedness that is by its terms subordinated to or that ranks equally with the Junior Subordinated Notes and (2) any unsecured indebtedness between or among the Company or its affiliates. Such Senior Indebtedness shall continue to be Senior Indebtedness and be entitled to the benefits of the subordination provisions contained in the Subordinated Note Indenture irrespective of any amendment, modification or waiver of any term of such Senior Indebtedness.

The Subordinated Note Indenture does not limit the aggregate amount of Senior Indebtedness that may be issued by the Company. As of March 31, 2005, Senior Indebtedness of the Company aggregated approximately \$4,335,000,000.

Additional Interest

Additional Interest is defined in the Subordinated Note Indenture as (i) such additional amounts as may be required so that the net amounts received and retained by a holder of Junior Subordinated Notes (if

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the holder is a Trust) after paying taxes, duties, assessments or governmental charges of whatever nature (other than withholding taxes) imposed by the United States or any other taxing authority will not be less than the amounts the holder would have received had no such taxes, duties, assessments, or other governmental charges been imposed; and (ii) any interest due and not paid on an interest payment date, together with interest from such interest payment date to the date of payment, compounded quarterly, on each interest payment date.

Certain Covenants

The Company covenants in the Subordinated Note Indenture, for the benefit of the holders of each series of Junior Subordinated Notes, that, (i) if at such time the Company shall have given notice of its election to extend an interest payment period for such series of Junior Subordinated Notes and such extension shall be continuing, (ii) if at such time the Company shall be in default with respect to its payment or other obligations under the Guarantee with respect to the Trust Securities, if any, related to such series of Junior Subordinated Notes, or (iii) if at such time an Event of Default under the Subordinated Note Indenture with respect to such series of Junior Subordinated Notes shall have occurred and be continuing, (a) the Company shall not declare or pay any dividend or make any distributions with respect to, or redeem, purchase, acquire or make a liquidation payment with respect to, any of its capital stock, and (b) the Company shall not make any payment of interest, principal or premium, if any, on or repay, repurchase or redeem any debt securities (including guarantees other than the Guarantees) issued by the Company which rank equally with or junior to the Junior Subordinated Notes. None of the foregoing, however, shall restrict (i) any of the actions described in the preceding sentence resulting from any reclassification of the Company's capital stock or the exchange or conversion of one class or series of the Company's capital stock for another class or series of the Company's capital stock, or (ii) the purchase of fractional interests in shares of the Company's capital stock pursuant to the conversion or exchange provisions of such capital stock or the security being converted or exchanged.

The Subordinated Note Indenture further provides that, for so long as the Trust Securities of any Trust remain outstanding, the Company covenants (i) to directly or indirectly maintain 100% ownership of the Common Securities of such Trust; provided, however, that any permitted successor of the Company under the Subordinated Note Indenture may succeed to the Company's ownership of such Common Securities, and (ii) to use its reasonable efforts to cause such Trust (a) to remain a statutory trust, except in connection with the distribution of Junior Subordinated Notes to the holders of Trust Securities in liquidation of such Trust, the redemption of all of the Trust Securities of such Trust, or certain mergers, consolidations or amalgamations, each as permitted by the related Trust Agreement, and (b) to otherwise continue to be classified as a grantor trust for United States federal income tax purposes.

Events of Default

The Subordinated Note Indenture provides that any one or more of the following described events with respect to the Junior Subordinated Notes of any series, which has occurred and is continuing, constitutes an Event of Default with respect to the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series:

(a) failure for 10 days to pay interest on the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series, including any Additional Interest (as defined in clause (ii) of the definition of Additional Interest in the Subordinated Note Indenture) on such unpaid interest, when due on an interest payment date other than at maturity or upon earlier redemption; provided, however, that a valid extension of the interest payment period by the Company shall not constitute a default in the payment of interest for this purpose; or

(b) failure for 10 days to pay Additional Interest (as defined in clause (i) of the definition of Additional Interest in the Subordinated Note Indenture); or

(c) failure to pay principal or premium, if any, or interest, including Additional Interest (as defined in clause (ii) of the definition of Additional Interest in the Subordinated Note Indenture), on the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series when due at maturity or upon earlier redemption; or

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(d) failure for three Business Days to deposit any sinking fund payment when due by the terms of a Junior Subordinated Note of such series; or

(e) failure to observe or perform any other covenant or warranty of the Company in the Subordinated Note Indenture (other than a covenant or warranty which has expressly been included in the Subordinated Note Indenture solely for the benefit of one or more series of Junior Subordinated Notes other than such series) for 90 days after written notice to the Company from the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee or the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the outstanding Junior Subordinated Notes of such series; or

(f) certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of the Company.

The holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the Junior Subordinated Notes of any series have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee with respect to the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series. If a Subordinated Note Indenture Event of Default occurs and is continuing with respect to the Junior Subordinated Notes of any series, then the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series may declare the principal amount of the Junior Subordinated Notes due and payable immediately by notice in writing to the Company (and to the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee if given by the holders), and upon any such declaration such principal amount shall become immediately due and payable. At any time after such a declaration of acceleration with respect to the Junior Subordinated Notes of any series has been made and before a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained as provided in Article Five of the Subordinated Note Indenture, the holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series may rescind and annul such declaration and its consequences if the default has been cured or waived and the Company has paid or deposited with the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee a sum sufficient to pay all matured installments of interest (including any Additional Interest) and principal due otherwise than by acceleration and all sums paid or advanced by the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, including reasonable compensation and expenses of the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee.

A holder of Preferred Securities may institute a legal proceeding directly against the Company, without first instituting a legal proceeding against the Property Trustee or any other person or entity, for enforcement of payment to such holder of principal of or interest on the Junior Subordinated Notes of the related series having a principal amount equal to the aggregate stated liquidation amount of the Preferred Securities of such holder on or after the due dates specified in the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series.

The holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the Junior Subordinated Notes of any series may, on behalf of the holders of all the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series, waive any past default with respect to such series, except (i) a default in the payment of principal or interest or (ii) a default in respect of a covenant or provision which under Article Nine of the Subordinated Note Indenture cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holder of each outstanding Junior Subordinated Note of such series affected.

Registration and Transfer

The Company shall not be required to (i) issue, register the transfer of or exchange Junior Subordinated Notes of any series during a period of 15 days immediately preceding the date notice is given identifying the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series called for redemption, or (ii) issue, register the transfer of or exchange any Junior Subordinated Notes so selected for redemption, in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any Junior Subordinated Note being redeemed in part.

Payment and Paying Agent

Unless otherwise indicated in an applicable Prospectus Supplement, payment of principal of any Junior Subordinated Notes will be made only against surrender to the Paying Agent of such Junior Subordinated

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Notes. Principal of and interest on Junior Subordinated Notes will be payable, subject to any applicable laws and regulations, at the office of such Paying Agent or Paying Agents as the Company may designate from time to time, except that, at the option of the Company, payment of any interest may be made by wire transfer or by check mailed to the address of the person entitled to an interest payment as such address shall appear in the Security Register with respect to the Junior Subordinated Notes. Payment of interest on Junior Subordinated Notes on any interest payment date will be made to the person in whose name the Junior Subordinated Notes (or predecessor security) are registered at the close of business on the record date for such interest payment.

Unless otherwise indicated in an applicable Prospectus Supplement, the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee will act as Paying Agent with respect to the Junior Subordinated Notes. The Company may at any time designate additional Paying Agents or rescind the designation of any Paying Agents or approve a change in the office through which any Paying Agent acts.

All moneys paid by the Company to a Paying Agent for the payment of the principal of or interest on the Junior Subordinated Notes of any series which remain unclaimed at the end of two years after such principal or interest shall have become due and payable will be repaid to the Company, and the holder of such Junior Subordinated Notes will from that time forward look only to the Company for payment of such principal and interest.

Modification

The Subordinated Note Indenture contains provisions permitting the Company and the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding Junior Subordinated Notes of each series affected, to modify the Subordinated Note Indenture or the rights of the holders of the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series; provided, that no such modification may, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding Junior Subordinated Note affected, (i) change the stated maturity of the principal of, or any installment of principal of or interest on, any Junior Subordinated Note, or reduce the principal amount of any Junior Subordinated Note or the rate of interest (including Additional Interest) on any Junior Subordinated Note or any premium payable upon the redemption of any Junior Subordinated Note, or change the method of calculating the rate of interest on any Junior Subordinated Note, or impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any such payment on or after the stated maturity of any Junior Subordinated Note (or, in the case of redemption, on or after the redemption date), or (ii) reduce the percentage of principal amount of the outstanding Junior Subordinated Notes of any series, the consent of whose holders is required for any such supplemental indenture, or the consent of whose holders is required for any waiver (of compliance with certain provisions of the Subordinated Note Indenture or certain defaults under the Subordinated Note Indenture and their consequences) provided for in the Subordinated Note Indenture, or (iii) modify any of the provisions of the Subordinated Note Indenture relating to supplemental indentures, waiver of past defaults, or waiver of certain covenants, except to increase any such percentage or to provide that certain other provisions of the Subordinated Note Indenture cannot be modified or waived without the consent of the holder of each outstanding Junior Subordinated Note affected thereby, or (iv) modify the provisions of the Subordinated Note Indenture with respect to the subordination of the Junior Subordinated Notes in a manner adverse to such holder.

In addition, the Company and the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee may execute, without the consent of any holders of Junior Subordinated Notes, any supplemental indenture for certain other usual purposes, including the creation of any new series of junior subordinated notes.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale

The Company shall not consolidate with or merge into any other corporation or convey, transfer or lease its properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person, unless (1) such other corporation or person is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the United States, any state in the United States or the District of Columbia and such other corporation or person expressly assumes, by supplemental indenture executed and delivered to the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, the payment of the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest (including Additional Interest) on all the Junior Subordinated Notes and the performance of every covenant of the Subordinated Note Indenture on the part of the Company to be

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performed or observed; (2) immediately after giving effect to such transactions, no Event of Default, and no event which, after notice or lapse of time or both, would become an Event of Default, shall have happened and be continuing; and (3) the Company has delivered to the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel, each stating that such transaction complies with the provisions of the Subordinated Note Indenture governing consolidation, merger, conveyance, transfer or lease and that all conditions precedent to the transaction have been complied with.

Information Concerning the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee

The Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, prior to an Event of Default with respect to Junior Subordinated Notes of any series, undertakes to perform, with respect to Junior Subordinated Notes of such series, only such duties as are specifically set forth in the Subordinated Note Indenture and, in case an Event of Default with respect to Junior Subordinated Notes of any series has occurred and is continuing, shall exercise, with respect to Junior Subordinated Notes of such series, the same degree of care as a prudent individual would exercise in the conduct of his or her own affairs. Subject to such provision, the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee is under no obligation to exercise any of the powers vested in it by the Subordinated Note Indenture at the request of any holder of Junior Subordinated Notes of any series, unless offered reasonable indemnity by such holder against the costs, expenses and liabilities which might be incurred by the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee. The Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee is not required to expend or risk its own funds or otherwise incur any financial liability in the performance of its duties if the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee reasonably believes that repayment or adequate indemnity is not reasonably assured to it.

JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. (formerly known as The Chase Manhattan Bank), the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, also serves as First Mortgage Bond Trustee, as Senior Note Indenture Trustee, as Property Trustee and as Guarantee Trustee. The Company and certain of its affiliates maintain deposit accounts and banking relationships with JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. also serves as trustee under other indentures pursuant to which securities of the Company and affiliates of the Company are outstanding.

Governing Law

The Subordinated Note Indenture and the Junior Subordinated Notes will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York.

Miscellaneous

The Company will have the right at all times to assign any of its rights or obligations under the Subordinated Note Indenture to a direct or indirect wholly owned subsidiary of the Company; provided, that, in the event of any such assignment, the Company will remain primarily liable for all such obligations. Subject to the foregoing, the Subordinated Note Indenture will be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties to the Subordinated Note Indenture and their respective successors and assigns.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED SECURITIES

Each Trust may issue only one series of Preferred Securities having terms described in the Prospectus Supplement relating to such Trust. The Trust Agreement of each Trust will authorize the Administrative Trustees, on behalf of the Trust, to issue the Preferred Securities of such Trust. The Preferred Securities of each Trust will have such terms, including distributions, redemption, voting, liquidation rights and such other preferred, deferral or other special rights or such restrictions as shall be set forth in the Trust Agreement of such Trust. Reference is made to the Prospectus Supplement relating to the Preferred Securities of a Trust for specific terms, including (i) the distinctive designation of such Preferred Securities; (ii) the number of Preferred Securities issued by such Trust; (iii) the distribution rate (or method of determining such rate) for Preferred Securities of such Trust and the date or dates on which such distributions shall be payable; (iv) whether distributions on such Preferred Securities shall be cumulative and, in the case of Preferred Securities having cumulative distribution rights, the date or dates, or method of determining the date or dates,

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from which distributions on such Preferred Securities shall be cumulative; (v) the amount or amounts that shall be paid out of the assets of such Trust to the holders of the Preferred Securities of such Trust upon voluntary or involuntary dissolution, winding-up or termination of such Trust; (vi) the obligation, if any, of such Trust to purchase or redeem such Preferred Securities and the price or prices at which, the period or periods within which, and the terms and conditions upon which such Preferred Securities shall be purchased or redeemed, in whole or in part, pursuant to such obligation; (vii) the voting rights, if any, of such Preferred Securities in addition to those required by law, including the number of votes per Preferred Security and any requirement for the approval by the holders of Preferred Securities as a condition to specified action or amendments to the Trust Agreement of such Trust; (viii) the rights, if any, to defer distributions on the Preferred Securities by extending the interest payment period on the related Junior Subordinated Notes; and (ix) any other relative rights, preferences, privileges, limitations or restrictions of such Preferred Securities not inconsistent with the Trust Agreement of such Trust or applicable law. All Preferred Securities offered by this Prospectus will be guaranteed by the Company to the extent set forth under Description of the Guarantees. Any material United States federal income tax considerations applicable to an offering of Preferred Securities will be described in the Prospectus Supplement relating to the Preferred Securities.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GUARANTEES

Set forth below is a summary of information concerning the Guarantees that will be executed and delivered by the Company for the benefit of the holders of Preferred Securities of the respective Trusts from time to time. Each Guarantee will be qualified as an indenture under the 1939 Act. JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. will act as indenture trustee under each Guarantee (the Guarantee Trustee) for purposes of the 1939 Act. The terms of the respective Guarantees will be those set forth in such Guarantee and those made part of such Guarantee by the 1939 Act. The following summary does not purport to be complete and is subject in all respects to the provisions of, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to, the Guarantees, the form of which is filed as an exhibit to the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus forms a part, and the 1939 Act. Each Guarantee will be held by the Guarantee Trustee for the benefit of holders of the Preferred Securities to which it relates.

General

Pursuant to each Guarantee, the Company will irrevocably and unconditionally agree, to the extent set forth in the Guarantee, to pay in full, to the holders of the related Preferred Securities, the Guarantee Payments (as defined below), to the extent not paid by, or on behalf of, the related Trust, regardless of any defense, right of set-off or counterclaim that the Company may have or assert against any person. The following payments or distributions with respect to the Preferred Securities of any Trust to the extent not paid or made by, or on behalf of, such Trust will be subject to the Guarantee related to the Preferred Securities (without duplication): (i) any accrued and unpaid distributions required to be paid on the Preferred Securities of such Trust but if and only if and to the extent that such Trust has funds legally and immediately available for these distributions, (ii) the redemption price, including all accrued and unpaid distributions to the date of redemption (the Redemption Price), with respect to any Preferred Securities called for redemption by such Trust, but if and only to the extent such Trust has funds legally and immediately available to pay such Redemption Price, and (iii) upon a dissolution, winding-up or termination of such Trust (other than in connection with the distribution of Junior Subordinated Notes to the holders of Trust Securities of such Trust or the redemption of all of the Preferred Securities of such Trust), the lesser of (a) the aggregate of the liquidation amount and all accrued and unpaid distributions on the Preferred Securities of such Trust to the date of payment, to the extent such Trust has funds legally and immediately available for such purpose, and (b) the amount of assets of such Trust remaining available for distribution to holders of Preferred Securities of such Trust in liquidation of such Trust (the Guarantee Payments). The Company's obligation to make a Guarantee Payment may be satisfied by direct payment of the required amounts by the Company to the holders of the related Preferred Securities or by causing the related Trust to pay such amounts to such holders.

Each Guarantee will be a guarantee of the Guarantee Payments with respect to the related Preferred Securities from the time of issuance of such Preferred Securities, but will not apply to the payment of

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distributions and other payments on such Preferred Securities when the related Trust does not have sufficient funds legally and immediately available to make such distributions or other payments. **If the Company does not make interest payments on the Junior Subordinated Notes held by the Property Trustee under any Trust, such Trust will not make distributions on its Preferred Securities.**

Subordination

The Company's obligations under each Guarantee to make the Guarantee Payments will constitute an unsecured obligation of the Company and will rank (i) subordinate and junior in right of payment to all other liabilities of the Company, including the Junior Subordinated Notes, except those obligations or liabilities made equal to or subordinate by their terms, (ii) equal to the most senior preferred or preference stock now issued by the Company or issued at a later date by the Company and with any guarantee now entered into by the Company or entered into at a later date by the Company in respect of any preferred or preference securities of any affiliate of the Company, and (iii) senior to all common stock of the Company. The terms of the Preferred Securities will provide that each holder of Preferred Securities by acceptance of Preferred Securities agrees to the subordination provisions and other terms of the Guarantee related to the Preferred Securities. The Company has outstanding preferred stock that ranks equal to the Guarantees and common stock that ranks junior to the Guarantees.

Each Guarantee will constitute a guarantee of payment and not of collection (that is, the guaranteed party may institute a legal proceeding directly against the guarantor to enforce its rights under the guarantee without first instituting a legal proceeding against any other person or entity).

Amendments and Assignment

Except with respect to any changes that do not materially and adversely affect the rights of holders of the related Preferred Securities (in which case no consent will be required), each Guarantee may be amended only with the prior approval of the holders of not less than 66²/₃% in liquidation amount of such outstanding Preferred Securities. The manner of obtaining any such approval of holders of the Preferred Securities will be as set forth in an accompanying Prospectus Supplement. All guarantees and agreements contained in each Guarantee shall bind the successors, assigns, receivers, trustees and representatives of the Company and shall inure to the benefit of the holders of the related Preferred Securities then outstanding.

Termination

Each Guarantee will terminate and be of no further force and effect as to the related Preferred Securities upon full payment of the Redemption Price of all such Preferred Securities, upon distribution of Junior Subordinated Notes to the holders of such Preferred Securities, or upon full payment of the amounts payable upon liquidation of the related Trust. Each Guarantee will continue to be effective or will be reinstated, as the case may be, if at any time any holder of the related Preferred Securities must restore payment of any sums paid with respect to such Preferred Securities or under such Guarantee.

Events of Default

An event of default under each Guarantee will occur upon the failure by the Company to perform any of its payment obligations under such Guarantee. The holders of a majority in liquidation amount of the Preferred Securities to which any Guarantee relates have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the Guarantee Trustee in respect of such Guarantee or to direct the exercise of any trust or power conferred upon the Guarantee Trustee under such Guarantee. Any holder of the related Preferred Securities may institute a legal proceeding directly against the Company to enforce its rights under such Guarantee without first instituting a legal proceeding against the Guarantee Trustee or any other person or entity. The holders of a majority in liquidation amount of Preferred Securities of any series may, by vote, on behalf of the holders of all the Preferred Securities of such series, waive any past event of default and its consequences.

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Information Concerning the Guarantee Trustee

The Guarantee Trustee, prior to the occurrence of any event of default with respect to any Guarantee and after the curing or waiving of all events of default with respect to such Guarantee, undertakes to perform only such duties as are specifically set forth in such Guarantee and, in case an event of default has occurred, shall exercise the same degree of care as a prudent individual would exercise in the conduct of his or her own affairs. Subject to such provisions, the Guarantee Trustee is under no obligation to exercise any of the powers vested in it by any Guarantee at the request of any holder of the related Preferred Securities, unless offered reasonable indemnity against the costs, expenses and liabilities which might be incurred by the Guarantee Trustee.

JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., the Guarantee Trustee, also serves as Property Trustee, as First Mortgage Bond Trustee, as Senior Note Indenture Trustee and as Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee. The Company and certain of its affiliates maintain deposit accounts and banking relationships with JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. serves as trustee under other indentures pursuant to which securities of the Company and affiliates of the Company are outstanding.

Governing Law

Each Guarantee will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York.

The Agreements as to Expenses and Liabilities

Pursuant to an Agreement as to Expenses and Liabilities to be entered into by the Company under each Trust Agreement, the Company will irrevocably and unconditionally guarantee to each person or entity to whom each Trust becomes indebted or liable the full payment of any indebtedness, expenses or liabilities of such Trust, other than obligations of such Trust to pay to the holders of the related Preferred Securities or other similar interests in such Trust the amounts due such holders pursuant to the terms of such Preferred Securities or such other similar interests, as the case may be.

**RELATIONSHIP AMONG THE PREFERRED SECURITIES,
THE JUNIOR SUBORDINATED NOTES AND THE GUARANTEES**

As long as payments of interest and other payments are made when due on each series of Junior Subordinated Notes issued to a Trust, such payments will be sufficient to cover distributions and payments due on the related Trust Securities of such Trust primarily because (i) the aggregate principal amount of each series of Junior Subordinated Notes will be equal to the sum of the aggregate stated liquidation amount of the related Trust Securities; (ii) the interest rate and interest and other payment dates on each series of Junior Subordinated Notes will match the distribution rate and distribution and other payment dates for the related Preferred Securities; (iii) the Company shall pay for all costs and expenses of each Trust pursuant to the Agreements as to Expenses and Liabilities; and (iv) each Trust Agreement provides that the Securities Trustees under each Trust Agreement shall not cause or permit the Trust to, among other things, engage in any activity that is not consistent with the purposes of the Trust.

Payments of distributions (to the extent funds for such purpose are legally and immediately available) and other payments due on the Preferred Securities (to the extent funds for such purpose are legally and immediately available) will be guaranteed by the Company as and to the extent set forth under Description of the Guarantees. If the Company does not make interest payments on any series of Junior Subordinated Notes, it is not expected that the related Trust will have sufficient funds to pay distributions on its Preferred Securities. Each Guarantee is a guarantee from the time of its issuance, but does not apply to any payment of distributions unless and until the related Trust has sufficient funds legally and immediately available for the payment of such distributions.

If the Company fails to make interest or other payments on any series of Junior Subordinated Notes when due (taking into account any extension period as described in the applicable Prospectus Supplement),

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the Trust Agreement provides a mechanism whereby the holders of the related Preferred Securities may appoint a substitute Property Trustee. Such holders may also direct the Property Trustee to enforce its rights under the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series, including proceeding directly against the Company to enforce such Junior Subordinated Notes. If the Property Trustee fails to enforce its rights under any series of Junior Subordinated Notes, to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, any holder of related Preferred Securities may institute a legal proceeding directly against the Company to enforce the Property Trustee's rights under such series of Junior Subordinated Notes without first instituting any legal proceeding against the Property Trustee or any other person or entity. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a holder of Preferred Securities may institute a legal proceeding directly against the Company, without first instituting a legal proceeding against the Property Trustee or any other person or entity, for enforcement of payment to such holder of principal of or interest on Junior Subordinated Notes of the related series having a principal amount equal to the aggregate stated liquidation amount of the Preferred Securities of such holder on or after the due dates specified in the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series.

If the Company fails to make payments under any Guarantee, such Guarantee provides a mechanism that allows the holders of the Preferred Securities to which such Guarantee relates to direct the Guarantee Trustee to enforce its rights under such Guarantee. In addition, any holder of Preferred Securities may institute a legal proceeding directly against the Company to enforce the Guarantee Trustee's rights under the related Guarantee without first instituting a legal proceeding against the Guarantee Trustee or any other person or entity.

Each Guarantee, the Subordinated Note Indenture, the Junior Subordinated Notes of the related series, the related Trust Agreement and the related Agreement as to Expenses and Liabilities, as described above, constitute a full and unconditional guarantee by the Company of the payments due on the related series of Preferred Securities.

Upon any voluntary or involuntary dissolution, winding-up or termination of any Trust, unless Junior Subordinated Notes of the related series are distributed in connection with such action, the holders of Preferred Securities of such Trust will be entitled to receive, out of assets legally available for distribution to holders, a liquidation distribution in cash as described in the applicable Prospectus Supplement. Upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation or bankruptcy of the Company, the Property Trustee, as holder of the related series of Junior Subordinated Notes, would be a subordinated creditor of the Company, subordinated in right of payment to all Senior Indebtedness, but entitled to receive payment in full of principal and interest, before any shareholders of the Company receive payments or distributions. Because the Company is guarantor under each Guarantee and has agreed to pay for all costs, expenses and liabilities of each Trust (other than the Trust's obligations to holders of the Preferred Securities) pursuant to the related Agreement as to Expenses and Liabilities, the positions of a holder of Preferred Securities and a holder of Junior Subordinated Notes of the related series relative to other creditors and to shareholders of the Company in the event of liquidation or bankruptcy of the Company would be substantially the same.

A default or event of default under any Senior Indebtedness would not constitute a default or Event of Default under the Subordinated Note Indenture. However, in the event of payment defaults under, or acceleration of, Senior Indebtedness, the subordination provisions of the Junior Subordinated Notes provide that no payments may be made in respect of the Junior Subordinated Notes until such Senior Indebtedness has been paid in full or any payment default of Senior Indebtedness has been cured or waived. Failure to make required payments on the Junior Subordinated Notes of any series would constitute an Event of Default under the Subordinated Note Indenture with respect to the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series except that failure to make interest payments on the Junior Subordinated Notes of such series will not be an Event of Default during an extension period as described in the applicable Prospectus Supplement.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

The Company may sell the new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes and the Junior Subordinated Notes and the Trusts may sell the Preferred Securities in one or more of the following ways from time to time: (i) to underwriters for resale to the public or to institutional investors;

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(ii) directly to institutional investors; or (iii) through agents to the public or to institutional investors. The Prospectus Supplement with respect to each series of new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities will set forth the terms of the offering of such new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities, including the name or names of any underwriters or agents, the purchase price of such new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities and the proceeds to the Company or the applicable Trust from such sale, any underwriting discounts or agency fees and other items constituting underwriters or agents compensation, any initial public offering price, any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers and any securities exchange on which such new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities may be listed.

If underwriters participate in the sale, such new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities will be acquired by the underwriters for their own account and may be resold from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale.

Unless otherwise set forth in the Prospectus Supplement, the obligations of the underwriters to purchase any series of new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities will be subject to certain conditions precedent and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of such series of new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities, if any are purchased.

Underwriters and agents may be entitled under agreements entered into with the Company and/or the applicable Trust to indemnification against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the 1933 Act. Underwriters and agents may engage in transactions with, or perform services for, the Company in the ordinary course of business.

Each series of new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities will be a new issue of securities and will have no established trading market. Any underwriters to whom new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities are sold for public offering and sale may make a market in such new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities, but such underwriters will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. The new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes or Preferred Securities may or may not be listed on a national securities exchange.

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain matters of Delaware law relating to the validity of the Preferred Securities will be passed upon on behalf of the Company and the Trusts by Richards, Layton & Finger, P.A., Wilmington, Delaware, special Delaware counsel to the Company and the Trusts. The validity of the new Bonds, new Stock, Preference Stock, Depositary Shares, Senior Notes, Junior Subordinated Notes, Guarantees and certain matters relating to such securities will be passed upon on behalf of the Company by Balch & Bingham LLP, Birmingham, Alabama, and by Troutman Sanders LLP, Atlanta, Georgia. Certain legal matters will be passed upon for the underwriters by Dewey Ballantine LLP, New York, New York. From time to time Dewey Ballantine LLP acts as counsel to affiliates of the Company for some matters.

EXPERTS

The financial statements and the related financial statement schedule incorporated by reference in this Prospectus by reference from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2004 have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their reports, which are incorporated by reference and have been so incorporated in reliance upon the report of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

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\$100,000,000
Series GG 5⁷/₈% Senior Notes
due February 1, 2046

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

Merrill Lynch & Co.
A.G. Edwards
UBS Investment Bank
February 1, 2006