

WINTRUST FINANCIAL CORP
Form S-3ASR
March 03, 2010

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 3, 2010

Registration No. 333-
Registration No. 333-

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington D.C. 20549

Form S-3

REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

Wintrust Financial Corporation

(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)

Wintrust Capital Trust VI

(Exact name of Co-Registrant as specified in its charter)

Illinois

*(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation of organization)*

36-3873352

*(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)*

Delaware

*(State or other jurisdiction
of
incorporation of
organization)*

To be applied for

*(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)*

727 North Bank Lane
Lake Forest, IL 60045
(847) 615-4096

*(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of Registrant s
and Additional Registrants principal executive offices)*

David A. Dykstra

Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

727 North Bank Lane
Lake Forest, IL 60045
(847) 615-4096

*(Name and address, including zip code, and telephone number,
including area code, of agent for service for Registrant and Additional Registrants)*

Copy to:

Lisa J. Reategui, Esq.
Sidley Austin LLP
One South Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60603
(312) 853-7000

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after this Registration Statement becomes effective.

If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box:

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box:

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer <input type="checkbox"/>	Accelerated filer <input type="checkbox"/>	Non-accelerated filer <input type="checkbox"/> (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)	Smaller reporting company <input type="checkbox"/>
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CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities to be Registered(3)	Amount to be Registered(1)	Proposed Maximum Offering Price per Unit(1)	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price(1)	Amount of Registration Fee(2)
Debt Securities				
Common Shares, no par value				

Preferred Shares, no par value
Depository Shares
Warrants
Stock Purchase Contracts
Stock Purchase Units
Trust Preferred Securities of
Wintrust Capital Trust VI
Junior Subordinated Debentures
Guarantee of Wintrust Financial
Corporation with respect to
Trust Preferred Securities of
Wintrust Capital Trust VI

- (1) Omitted pursuant to General Instructions II.E of Form S-3. An indeterminate amount of securities as may from time to time to be issued at indeterminate prices is being registered pursuant to this registration statement.
 - (2) In accordance with Rules 456(b) and 457(r), the Registrants are deferring payment of all registration fees.
 - (3) The securities registered under this registration statement may be sold separately, together or as units with other securities registered under this registration statement and may include hybrid securities consisting of a combination of features of any of the securities listed in the table.
-

PROSPECTUS

Wintrust Financial Corporation

**Debt Securities, Common Shares, Preferred Shares, Depositary Shares,
Warrants, Stock Purchase Contracts, Stock Purchase Units, Junior
Subordinated Debentures, Guarantee of Trust Preferred Securities
and Hybrid Securities Combining Elements of the Foregoing**

Wintrust Capital Trust VI

Trust Preferred Securities

This prospectus relates to the potential offer and sale, in one or more offerings, of debt securities, common shares, preferred shares, depositary shares, warrants, stock purchase contracts, stock purchase units, trust preferred securities, junior subordinated debentures, guarantee of trust preferred securities and hybrid securities combining elements of the foregoing. We will describe the specific terms of the securities in one or more supplements to this prospectus at the time of each offering. Those terms may include maturity, interest rate, sinking fund terms, currency of payments, dividends, redemption terms, listing on a securities exchange, amount payable at maturity, conversion or exchange rights, liquidation amount, subsidiary guarantees and subordination.

The securities may be offered on a continuous or delayed basis from time to time directly or through underwriters, dealers or agents and in one or more public or private transactions and at fixed prices, prevailing market prices, at prices related to prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices. If any offering involves underwriters, dealers or agents, we will describe the arrangements with them in the prospectus supplement that relates to that offering. This prospectus may not be used to offer and sell the securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement. A prospectus supplement may add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, as well as the documents incorporated and deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus, carefully before you invest.

Our common stock is quoted on The NASDAQ Global Select Market under the trading symbol **WTFC**. On March 2, 2010, the closing sale price on The NASDAQ Global Select Market for our common stock was \$34.23. None of the other securities that may be offered pursuant to this prospectus are listed on an exchange.

Investing in our securities involves risk. See **Risk Factors on page 2 of this prospectus.**

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

These securities will not be savings accounts, deposits or other obligations of any bank or nonbank subsidiary of ours and are not insured or guaranteed by the FDIC or any other governmental agency.

The date of this prospectus is March 3, 2010

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of an automatic registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, as a well-known seasoned issuer as defined in Rule 405 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, utilizing a shelf registration process. Under this shelf process, we may, from time to time, offer and sell, in one or more offerings, the securities described in this prospectus. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we use this prospectus to offer these securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. Please carefully read this prospectus and the prospectus supplement together with the additional information described under the heading Where You Can Find More Information.

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in any accompanying prospectus supplement. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different information. This document may only be used where it is legal to sell these securities. We are not making an offer of these securities in any state where the offer is not permitted. You should only assume that the information in this prospectus or in any prospectus supplement is accurate as of the date on the front of the document. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since that date.

Each reference in this prospectus to Wintrust or the Company, means Wintrust Financial Corporation and its consolidated subsidiaries, unless the context requires otherwise. Each reference in this prospectus to the trust or the Trust refers to Wintrust Capital Trust VI. The terms we, us and our refer to Wintrust when discussing the securities to be issued by Wintrust, the Trust when discussing the securities to be issued by the Trust and collectively to all of the Registrants where the context requires.

SPECIAL NOTES CONCERNING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, the documents that we incorporate by reference and any related prospectus supplement may contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of the federal securities laws statements that are statements concerning our expectations, plans, objectives, future financial performance and other items that are not historical facts. These statements are forward looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward looking statements involve risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results or outcomes to differ materially from those included in the forward looking statements. In connection with the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, the Registrants are filing herein or incorporated by reference cautionary statements identifying important factors that could cause their respective actual results to differ materially from those projected in forward looking statements (as such term is defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995) made by or on behalf of the Registrants. Any statements that express or involve discussions as to expectations, beliefs, plans, objectives, assumptions or future events, performance or growth (often, but not always, through the use of words or phrases such as intend, plan, project, expect, anticipate, believe, estimate, co possible, point, will, may, should, would, could and similar expressions) are not statements of historical fact or forward looking. Forward looking statements involve estimates, assumptions and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed in the forward looking statements. Accordingly, any such statements are qualified in their entirety by reference to, and are accompanied by, the important factors described in the sections of Wintrust's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009 filed with the SEC on March 1, 2010 entitled Risk Factors and Forward-Looking Statements that could cause a Registrant's actual results to differ materially from those contained in forward looking statements of such Registrant made by or on behalf of such Registrant.

All such factors are difficult to predict, contain uncertainties that may materially affect actual results and are beyond the control of the Registrants. You are cautioned not to place undue reliance on forward looking statements. Any forward looking statement speaks only as of the date on which such statement is made, and the Registrants undertake no obligation to update any forward looking statement or statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date on which such statement is made or to reflect the occurrence of unanticipated events. New factors emerge from time to time, and it is not possible for each Registrant's management to predict all of such factors, nor can such management assess the impact of each such factor on the business of such Registrant or the extent to which any factor, or combination of factors, may cause actual results of such Registrant to differ materially from those contained in any forward looking statements.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly, and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Our SEC filings are available to the public over the Internet at the SEC's web site at <http://www.sec.gov> and on the investor relations page of our website at <http://www.wintrust.com>. Except for those SEC filings incorporated by reference in this prospectus, none of the other information on our website is part of this prospectus. You may also read and copy any document we file with the SEC at its public reference facilities at 100 F Street N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You can also obtain copies of the documents upon the payment of a duplicating fee to the SEC. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the public reference facilities.

This prospectus omits some information contained in the registration statement in accordance with SEC rules and regulations. You should review the information and exhibits included in the registration statement for further information about us and the securities we are offering. Statements in this prospectus concerning any document we

filed as an exhibit to the registration statement or that we otherwise filed with the SEC are not intended to be comprehensive and are qualified by reference to these filings. You should review the complete document to evaluate these statements.

We have not included separate financial statements of the Trust. Wintrust and the Trust do not consider that such financial statements would be material to holders of Trust Preferred Securities of the Trust because

the Trust is a special purpose entity, has no operating history and has no independent operations. The Trust is not currently involved in and does not anticipate being involved in any activity other than as described under Prospectus Summary The Trust . Further, Wintrust and the Trust believe that financial statements of the Trust are not material to the holders of the Trust Preferred Securities of the Trust since Wintrust Financial will guarantee the Trust Preferred Securities of the Trust. Holders of the Trust Preferred Securities of the Trust, with respect to the payment of distributions and amounts upon liquidation, dissolution and winding-up, are at least in the same position vis-à-vis the assets of Wintrust as a preferred stockholder of Wintrust. Wintrust beneficially owns all of the undivided beneficial interests in the assets of the Trust (other than the beneficial interests represented by the Trust Preferred Securities of the Trusts). See Prospectus Summary The Trust , Description of the Trust and Trust Preferred Securities. In the event that the Trust issues securities, our filings under the Exchange Act will include an audited footnote to Wintrust s annual financial statements stating that the Trust is wholly owned by Wintrust, that the sole asset of the Trust is the Senior Debentures or the Subordinated Debentures of Wintrust having a specified aggregate principal amount, and that, considered together, the back-up undertakings, including the Guarantees of Wintrust, constitute a full and unconditional guarantee by Wintrust of the Trust s obligations under any Trust Preferred Securities issued by the Trust.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference much of the information that we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those publicly available documents. The information that we incorporate by reference is an important part of this prospectus. Any statement contained in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus will be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus or any other subsequently filed document that is deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus modifies or supersedes the statement. Any statement so modified or superseded will not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus.

This prospectus incorporates by reference the documents listed below and any filings we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 after the initial filing of the registration statement related to this prospectus until the termination of the offering of the securities described in this prospectus; provided, however, that we are not incorporating by reference any documents, portions of documents or other information that is deemed to have been furnished and not filed with the SEC:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009, including information specifically incorporated by reference into our Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009;

the sections of our Definitive Proxy Statement for the 2009 Annual Meeting of Stockholders filed with the SEC on April 20, 2009 that are incorporated by reference in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2008;

our Current Report on Form 8-K, filed with the SEC on August 20, 2009; and

the description of our common stock, which is registered under Section 12 of the Securities Exchange Act, in our Form 8-A filed with the SEC on January 3, 1997, including any subsequently filed amendments and reports updating such description.

You may request a copy of these filings, other than an exhibit to a filing unless that exhibit is specifically incorporated by reference into that filing, at no cost, by writing to us at the following address or calling us at the following telephone number:

Investor Relations
Wintrust Financial Corporation
727 North Bank Lane
Lake Forest, Illinois 60045
(847) 615-4096

You should rely only on the information incorporated by reference or provided in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement. We have not authorized anyone else to provide you with different information or to make any representations other than as contained in this prospectus or in any prospectus supplement. We are not making any offer of these securities in any state where the offer is not permitted.

PROSPECTUS SUMMARY

Wintrust

Wintrust Financial Corporation, an Illinois corporation, which was incorporated in 1992, is a financial holding company based in Lake Forest, Illinois, with total assets of approximately \$12.2 billion as of December 31, 2009. We conduct our businesses through three segments: community banking, specialty finance and wealth management.

We provide community-oriented, personal and commercial banking services to customers located in the greater Chicago, Illinois metropolitan area and in southeastern Wisconsin through our fifteen wholly owned banking subsidiaries (collectively, the **banks**), as well as the origination and purchase of residential mortgages for sale into the secondary market through our wholly owned subsidiary, Wintrust Mortgage Corporation.

We provide financing for the payment of commercial insurance premiums and life insurance premiums (**premium finance receivables**) on a national basis through our wholly owned subsidiary, First Insurance Funding Corporation, and short-term accounts receivable financing (**Tricom finance receivables**) and out-sourced administrative services through our wholly owned subsidiary, Tricom, Inc. of Milwaukee.

We provide a full range of wealth management services primarily to customers in the Chicago, Illinois metropolitan area and in southeastern Wisconsin through three separate subsidiaries, including Wayne Hummer Trust Company, N.A. (**WHTC**), Wayne Hummer Investments, LLC (**WHI**) and Wayne Hummer Asset Management Company (**WHAMC**). WHTC, WHI and WHAMC are referred to collectively as the **Wayne Hummer Companies**.

Our common stock is traded on The NASDAQ Global Select Market under the ticker symbol **WTFC**. Our principal executive office is located at 727 North Bank Lane, Lake Forest, Illinois, 60045, telephone number: (847) 615-4096.

The Trust

The Trust is a statutory business trust formed under the Delaware Statutory Trust Act pursuant to (i) a trust agreement executed by Wintrust, as sponsor, and the trustees of the Trust (the **Trustees**) and (ii) the filing of a certificate of trust with the Secretary of State of the State of Delaware. At the time of public issuance of Trust Preferred Securities of the Trust, the trust agreement will be amended and restated in its entirety (as so amended and restated, the **Trust Agreement**) and will be qualified as an indenture under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended (the **Trust Indenture Act**). In exchange for our capital contribution to the Trust, we will own all of the common securities of the trust. The trust exists exclusively for the following purposes:

issuing the trust preferred securities to the public for cash;

issuing the common securities to us;

investing the proceeds from the sale of its preferred and common securities in an equivalent amount of junior subordinated debentures to be issued by us; and

engaging in activities that are incidental to those listed above, such as receiving payments on the debentures and making distributions to security holders, furnishing notices and other administrative tasks.

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A detailed description of the general terms of the trust preferred securities is set forth in Description of the Trust Preferred Securities and the applicable prospectus supplement will set forth the specific terms of any trust preferred securities.

The Trust's principal executive offices are located at 727 North Bank Lane, Lake Forest, Illinois, 60045, telephone number: (847) 615-4096.

RISK FACTORS

Our business is subject to uncertainties and risks. You should carefully consider and evaluate all of the information included and incorporated by reference in this prospectus, including the risk factors incorporated by reference from our most recent annual report on Form 10-K, as updated by our quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and other SEC filings filed after such annual report. It is possible that our business, financial condition, liquidity or results of operations could be materially adversely affected by any of these risks.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Except as otherwise provided in the related prospectus supplement, we will use the net proceeds from the sale by the Company of the offered securities for general corporate purposes. These purposes may include:

repayments or refinancing of debt;

working capital;

capital expenditures;

acquisitions; and

repurchase or redemption of our securities including our preferred shares, common shares or warrants.

Pending such use, we may temporarily invest the net proceeds in short-term securities or reduce our short-term indebtedness, or we may hold the net proceeds in deposit accounts in our subsidiary banks.

The Trust will invest all proceeds received from the sale of its preferred securities and common securities in a particular series of subordinated debt securities of Wintrust Financial Corporation.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

Our historical ratios of earnings to fixed charges for the periods indicated are set forth in the table below. The ratio of earnings to fixed charges is computed by dividing (1) income before income taxes and fixed charges by (2) total fixed charges. For purposes of computing these ratios:

fixed charges, excluding interest on deposits, include interest expense (other than on deposits) and the estimated portion of rental expense attributable to interest, net of income from subleases; and

fixed charges, including interest on deposits, include all interest expense and the estimated portion of rental expense attributable to interest, net of income from subleases.

Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges	Year Ended December 31,				
	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Including interest on deposits	1.54x	1.11x	1.24x	1.34x	1.55x
Excluding interest on deposits	3.64x	1.60x	2.52x	3.41x	4.08x

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES

We may offer under this prospectus debt securities, common shares, preferred shares, depositary shares, warrants, stock purchase contracts, stock purchase units, junior subordinated debentures, guarantee of trust preferred securities or any combination of the foregoing, either individually or as units consisting of two or more securities. The trust may offer trust preferred securities under this prospectus.

The following description of the terms of these securities sets forth some of the general terms and provisions of securities that we may offer. The particular terms of securities offered by any prospectus supplement and the extent, if any, to which the general terms set forth below do not apply to those securities, will be described in the related prospectus supplement. In addition, if we offer securities as units, the terms of the units will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. If the information contained in the prospectus supplement differs from the following description, you should rely on the information in the prospectus supplement.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

Debt May be Senior or Subordinated

We may issue, and offer pursuant to this prospectus, senior or subordinated debt securities. The senior debt securities and, in the case of debt securities in bearer form, any coupons to these securities, will constitute part of our senior debt and, except as otherwise included in the applicable prospectus supplement, will rank on a parity with all of our other unsecured and unsubordinated debt. The subordinated debt securities and any coupons will constitute part of our subordinated debt and will be subordinate and junior in right of payment to all of our senior indebtedness, which will be defined in the applicable prospectus supplement. If this prospectus is being delivered in connection with a series of subordinated debt securities, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the information we incorporate in this prospectus by reference will indicate the approximate amount of senior indebtedness outstanding as of the end of the most recent fiscal quarter. Our debt securities will be issued under an indenture, the form of which is included as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

The following briefly summarizes the material provisions of the indenture, which has been filed with the SEC and incorporated by reference in the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. This summary of the indenture is not complete and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the indentures. You should read the more detailed provisions of the indenture, including the defined terms, for provisions that may be important to you. You should also read the particular terms of a series of debt securities, which will be described in more detail in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Payments

We may issue debt securities from time to time in one or more series. The provisions of the indenture allow us to reopen a previous issue of a series of debt securities and issue additional debt securities of that issue. The debt securities may be denominated and payable in U.S. dollars.

Debt securities may bear interest at a fixed rate or a floating rate, which, in either case, may be zero, or at a rate that varies during the lifetime of the debt security. Debt securities may be sold at a discount below their stated principal amount.

Terms Specified in Prospectus Supplement

The prospectus supplement will contain, where applicable, the following terms of and other information relating to any offered debt securities:

classification as senior or subordinated debt securities and the specific designation;

aggregate principal amount, purchase price and denomination;

the currency in which the debt securities are denominated and/or in which principal and/or interest, if any, is payable;

date of maturity;

the interest rate or rates or the method by which the calculation agent will determine the interest rate or rates, if any;

the interest payment dates, if any;

the place or places for payment of the principal of and any premium and/or interest on the debt securities;

any repayment, redemption, prepayment or sinking fund provisions, including any redemption notice provisions;

whether we will issue the debt securities in registered form or bearer form or both and, if we are offering debt securities in bearer form, any restrictions applicable to the exchange of one form for

another and to the offer, sale and delivery of those debt securities in bearer form and whether such bearer securities will be issued with coupons;

whether we will issue the debt securities in definitive form and under what terms and conditions;

the terms on which holders of the debt securities may convert or exchange these securities into or for common or preferred stock or other securities of ours offered hereby, into or for common or preferred stock or other securities of an entity affiliated with us or debt or equity or other securities of an entity not affiliated with us, or for the cash value of our stock or any of the above securities, the terms on which conversion or exchange may occur, including whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option, the period during which conversion or exchange may occur, the initial conversion or exchange price or rate and the circumstances or manner in which the amount of common or preferred stock or other securities issuable upon conversion or exchange may be adjusted;

information as to the methods for determining the amount of principal or interest payable on any date and/or the currencies, securities or baskets of securities, commodities or indices to which the amount payable on that date is linked;

any agents for the debt securities, including trustees, depositories, authenticating or paying agents, transfer agents or registrars;

any applicable United States federal income tax consequences, including:

whether and under what circumstances we will pay additional amounts on debt securities held by a person who is not a U.S. person for any tax, assessment or governmental charge withheld or deducted and, if so, whether we will have the option to redeem those debt securities rather than pay the additional amounts;

tax considerations applicable to any discounted debt securities or to debt securities issued at par that are treated as having been issued at a discount for United States federal income tax purposes;

tax considerations applicable to any debt securities denominated and payable in foreign currencies; and

any other specific terms of the debt securities, including any additional events of default or covenants, and any terms required by or advisable under applicable laws or regulations.

any other terms and conditions set forth therein.

Registration and Transfer of Debt Securities

Holders may present debt securities for exchange, and holders of registered debt securities may present these securities for transfer, in the manner, at the places and subject to the restrictions stated in the debt securities and described in the applicable prospectus supplement. We will provide these services without charge except for any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with these services and subject to any limitations provided in the applicable indenture.

If any of the securities are held in global form, the procedures for transfer of interests in those securities will depend upon the procedures of the depository for those global securities.

Subordination Provisions

Subordinated debt securities will be subordinate and junior in right of payment, to the extent and in the manner stated in the applicable prospectus supplement, to all of our senior indebtedness.

Unless all principal of and any premium or interest on the senior indebtedness has been paid in full, or provision has been made to make these payments in full, no payment of principal of, or any premium or interest on, any subordinated debt securities may be made in the event:

of any insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings, or any receivership, liquidation, reorganization or other similar proceedings involving us or a substantial part of our property;

that (a) a default has occurred in the payment of principal, any premium, interest or other monetary amounts due and payable on any senior indebtedness or (b) there has occurred any other event of default concerning senior indebtedness that permits the holder or holders of the senior indebtedness to accelerate the maturity of the senior indebtedness, with notice or passage of time, or both, and that event of default has continued beyond the applicable grace period, if any, and that default or event of default has not been cured or waived or has not ceased to exist; or

that the principal of and accrued interest on any subordinated debt securities have been declared due and payable upon an event of default and that declaration has not been rescinded and annulled as provided under the applicable supplemental indenture.

Covenants Affecting Mergers and Other Significant Corporate Actions

Merger, Consolidation, Sale, Lease or Conveyance. The indenture provides that we will not merge or consolidate with any other person and will not sell, lease or convey all or substantially all of our assets to any other person, unless:

we will be the continuing corporation; or

the successor corporation or person that acquires all or substantially all of our assets:

will be a corporation organized under the laws of the United States, a state of the United States or the District of Columbia; and

will expressly assume all of our obligations under the indenture and the debt securities issued under the indenture; and

immediately prior to or after giving effect to the merger, consolidation, sale, lease or conveyance, we or that successor corporation will not be in default in the performance of the covenants and conditions of the indenture.

Absence of Protections Against All Potential Actions of Wintrust. There are no covenants or other provisions in the indenture that would afford holders of debt securities additional protection in the event of a recapitalization transaction, a change of control of Wintrust or a highly leveraged transaction. The merger covenant described above would only apply if the recapitalization transaction, change of control or highly leveraged transaction were structured to include a merger or consolidation of Wintrust or a sale, lease or conveyance of all or substantially all of our assets. However, we may provide specific protections, such as a put right or increased interest, for particular debt securities, which we would describe in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Events of Default

The indenture provides holders of debt securities with remedies if we fail to perform specific obligations, such as making payments on the debt securities or other indebtedness, or if we become bankrupt. Holders should review these

provisions and understand which of our actions trigger an event of default and which actions do not. The indenture permits the issuance of debt securities in one or more series, and, in many cases, whether an event of default has occurred is determined on a series-by-series basis.

An event of default is defined under the indenture, with respect to any series of debt securities issued under that indenture, as being:

default in payment of any principal of the debt securities of that series, either at maturity or upon any redemption or otherwise;

default for 30 days in payment of any interest on any debt securities of that series;

default for 60 days after written notice in the observance or performance of any covenant or agreement in the debt securities of that series or the related indenture (other than a covenant or warranty with respect to the debt securities of that series the breach or nonperformance of which is otherwise included in the definition of event of default);

specified events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization;

failure to make any payment at maturity, including any applicable grace period, on any indebtedness under the indenture in an amount in excess of \$10,000,000 and continuance of that failure for a period of 30 days after written notice of the failure to us by the applicable trustee, or to us and the applicable trustee by the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the outstanding indebtedness under the indenture, treated as one class;

default with respect to any indebtedness under the indenture in excess of \$10,000,000 which default would have resulted in such indebtedness becoming or being declared due and payable prior to the date on which it would otherwise have come due and payable, without such indebtedness having been discharged or the acceleration having been cured, waived, rescinded or annulled for a period of 30 days after written notice of the acceleration to us by the applicable trustee, or to us and the applicable trustee by the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of such indebtedness, treated as one class; or

any other event of default provided in a board resolution, an officer's certificate or the supplemental indenture under which that series of debt securities is issued.

If a failure, default or acceleration referred to in the fifth and sixth clauses above ceases or is cured, waived, rescinded or annulled, then the event of default under the applicable indenture caused by that failure, default or acceleration will also be considered cured.