WINTRUST

NEWS RELEASE

Wintrust Financial Corporation Declares Semi-Annual Dividend

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LAKE FOREST, Ill., July 29 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Wintrust Financial Corporation (the "Wintrust") (Nasdaq: WTFC) today reported that its Board of Directors approved a semi-annual cash dividend of $0.10 per share of outstanding common stock. The dividend is payable on August 24, 2004 to shareholders of record as of August 10, 2004. This cash dividend, on an annualized basis, represents a 25.0% increase over the per share common stock dividends paid during 2003.

Wintrust is a financial holding company whose common stock is traded on the Nasdaq Stock Market(R) (Nasdaq: WTFC). Its ten suburban Chicago community bank subsidiaries, each of which was founded as a de novo bank since December 1991, are located primarily in high income retail markets -- Lake Forest Bank & Trust Company, Hinsdale Bank & Trust Company, North Shore Community Bank & Trust Company in Wilmette, Libertyville Bank & Trust Company, Barrington Bank & Trust Company, Crystal Lake Bank & Trust Company, Northbrook Bank & Trust Company, Advantage National Bank in Elk Grove Village, Village Bank & Trust in Arlington Heights and Beverly Bank & Trust Company in Chicago. The banks also operate facilities in Buffalo Grove, Cary, Chicago, Clarendon Hills, Glencoe, Gurnee, Highland Park, Highwood, Hoffman Estates, Lake Bluff, McHenry, Prospect Heights, Ravinia, Riverside, Roselle, Skokie, Wauconda, Western Springs and Winnetka, Illinois.

Additionally, the Company operates various non-bank subsidiaries. First Insurance Funding Corporation, one of the largest commercial insurance premium finance companies operating in the United States, serves commercial loan customers throughout the country. Tricom, Inc. of Milwaukee provides high- yielding, short-term accounts receivable financing and value-added out-sourced administrative services, such as data processing of payrolls, billing and cash management services, to temporary staffing service clients located throughout the United States. WestAmerica Mortgage Company engages primarily in the origination and purchase of residential mortgages for

sale into the secondary market through origination offices located throughout the United States. Loans are also originated nationwide through relationships with wholesale and correspondent offices. Guardian Real Estate Services, Inc. of Oakbrook Terrace provides document preparation and other loan closing services to WestAmerica Mortgage Company and its mortgage broker affiliates. Wayne Hummer Investments, LLC is a broker-dealer providing a full range of private client and brokerage services to clients located primarily in the Midwest. Focused Investments LLC is a broker-dealer that provides a full range of investment solutions to clients through a network of community-based financial institutions throughout the Midwest. Wayne Hummer Asset Management Company provides money management services and advisory services to individual accounts as well as the Wayne Hummer Companies' proprietary mutual funds. Wayne Hummer Trust Company, a trust subsidiary, allows Wintrust to service customers' trust and investment needs at each banking location. Wintrust Information Technology Services Company provides information technology support, item capture and statement preparation services to the Wintrust subsidiaries.

Currently, Wintrust operates a total of 42 banking offices and is in the process of constructing several additional branch facilities. All of the Company's banking subsidiaries are locally managed with large local boards of directors. Wintrust Financial Corporation has been one of the fastest growing bank groups in Illinois.

SOURCE Wintrust Financial Corporation
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(WTFC)

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