

WINTRUST FINANCIAL CORP

Form 425

November 17, 2004

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**UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549**

**FORM 8-K**

**CURRENT REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(D)  
OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

Date of Report (Date of Earliest Event Reported): November 17, 2004

**WINTRUST FINANCIAL CORPORATION**

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

Commission File Number 0-21923

Illinois

36-3873352

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(State or other Jurisdiction of Incorporation)

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

727 North Bank Lane  
Lake Forest, Illinois 60045

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(Address of Principal Executive Offices)

(847) 615-4096

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(Registrant's Telephone Number, Including Area Code)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
  - Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
  - Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
  - Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))
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Item 8.01. Other Events.

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**Item 8.01. Other Events.**

On November 17, 2004, Wintrust Financial Corporation announced that it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire First Northwest Bancorp, Inc., parent company of First Northwest Bank, in a cash and stock merger transaction. Attached as Exhibit 99.1 is a copy of the press release relating to the announcement, which is incorporated herein by reference.

**Item 9.01 (c). Exhibits.**

Exhibit 99.1      Press Release dated November 17, 2004.

**SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

**WINTRUST FINANCIAL CORPORATION**  
(Registrant)

Date: November 17, 2004

/s/ David L. Stoehr  
David L. Stoehr  
Executive Vice President &  
Chief Financial Officer

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**Exhibit**

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99.1 Press release dated November 17, 2004.

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