

HALLMARK FINANCIAL SERVICES INC
Form S-3
January 13, 2011

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on January 13, 2011

Registration No. 333-[_____]

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM S-3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

HALLMARK FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Nevada
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

87-0447375
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification Number)

777 Main Street
Suite 1000
Fort Worth, Texas 76102
(817) 348-1600
(Address, including zip code, and telephone number,
including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)

Mark J. Morrison
President and Chief Executive Officer
Hallmark Financial Services, Inc.
777 Main Street
Suite 1000
Fort Worth, Texas 76102
(817) 348-1600
(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

Copies to:
Steven D. Davidson
McGuire, Craddock & Strother, P.C.
2501 N. Harwood

Suite 1800
Dallas, Texas 75201
(214) 954-6800

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public:
From time to time after the effective date of this registration statement.

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, please 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, please 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 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 "larger accelerated filer," "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer
 Non-accelerated filer (Do not check if a smaller reporting company) Smaller reporting company

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

| Title of Each Class of Securities to be Registered | Amount to be Registered | Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Unit | Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price | Amount of Registration Fee |
|--|-------------------------|--|---|----------------------------|
| Common Stock, \$0.18 par value per share | 3,274,830(1) | \$ 9.05(2) | \$ 29,637,212(2) | \$ 3,441 |

(1) Pursuant to Rule 416 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, the shares of common stock registered for resale by the selling stockholders also include such indeterminate number of shares of common stock as may be issued from time to time with respect to shares being registered hereunder as a result of stock splits, stock dividends or similar transactions.

(2) Estimated solely for the purpose of calculating the registration fee in accordance with Rule 457 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, based on the per share average of the high and low reported prices for the common stock on the Nasdaq Global Market as of January 10, 2011.

The registrant hereby amends this registration statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this registration

statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or until the registration statement shall become effective on such date as the Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. The securities described herein may not be sold until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED JANUARY 13, 2011

PROSPECTUS

Hallmark Financial Services, Inc.

3,274,830 Shares of Common Stock
Offered by Selling Stockholders

The selling stockholders identified in this prospectus may offer and sell up to 3,274,830 shares of our common stock from time to time under this prospectus and any prospectus supplement. The selling stockholders may offer and sell such shares to or through one or more underwriters, dealers and agents, or directly to purchasers, on a continuous or delayed basis. We will not receive any of the proceeds from the sale of our common stock by the selling stockholders. See "Selling Stockholders" and "Plan of Distribution."

Shares of our common stock are traded on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "HALL."

Our principal executive offices are located at 777 Main Street, Suite 1000, Fort Worth, Texas 76102, and our telephone number is (817) 348-1600.

AN INVESTMENT IN OUR COMMON STOCK INVOLVES RISK. YOU SHOULD CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE INFORMATION UNDER THE HEADING "RISK FACTORS" COMMENCING ON PAGE 3 OF THIS PROSPECTUS BEFORE INVESTING IN OUR COMMON STOCK.

NEITHER THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION NOR ANY STATE SECURITIES COMMISSION HAS APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED OF THESE SECURITIES OR DETERMINED IF THIS PROSPECTUS IS TRUTHFUL OR COMPLETE. ANY REPRESENTATION TO THE CONTRARY IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE.

The date of this prospectus is [_____], 2011.

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) pursuant to which the selling stockholders may, from time to time, sell up to 3,274,830 shares of our common stock. This prospectus provides a general description of our common stock. We may provide a prospectus supplement that adds to, updates or changes the information contained in this prospectus. You should carefully read this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, as well as the information incorporated in this prospectus by reference. See, “Information Incorporated by Reference.” Any information in any prospectus supplement or any subsequent material incorporated herein by reference will supersede the information in this prospectus or any earlier prospectus supplement.

Unless the context requires otherwise, in this prospectus the term “Hallmark” refers solely to Hallmark Financial Services, Inc. and the terms “we,” “our,” “our company” and “us” refer to Hallmark and its subsidiaries.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, any prospectus summary and the materials incorporated herein by reference contain certain forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, which are intended to be covered by the safe harbors created thereby. Forward-looking statements include statements which are predictive in nature, which depend upon or refer to future events or conditions, or which include words such as “expect,” “anticipate,” “intend,” “plan,” “believe,” “estimate” or similar expressions. These statements include the plans and objectives of management for future operations, including plans and objectives relating to future growth of our business activities and availability of funds. Statements regarding the following subjects are forward-looking by their nature:

- our business and growth strategies;
- our performance goals;
- our projected financial condition and operating results;
- our understanding of our competition;
- industry and market trends;
- the impact of technology on our products, operations and business; and
- any other statements or assumptions that are not historical facts.

The forward-looking statements included in this prospectus, any prospectus summary and the materials incorporated herein by reference are based on current expectations that involve numerous risks and uncertainties. Assumptions relating to these forward-looking statements involve judgments with respect to, among other things, future economic, competitive and market conditions, regulatory framework, weather-related events and future business decisions, all of which are difficult or impossible to predict accurately and many of which are beyond our control. Although we believe that the assumptions underlying these forward-looking statements are reasonable, any of the assumptions could be inaccurate and, therefore, there can be no assurance that the forward-looking statements included in this prospectus will prove to be accurate. In light of the significant uncertainties inherent in these forward-looking statements, the inclusion of such information should not be regarded as a representation by us or any other person that our objectives and plans will be achieved.

COMPANY OVERVIEW

We are a diversified property/casualty insurance group that serves businesses and individuals in specialty and niche markets. We offer standard commercial insurance, specialty commercial insurance and personal insurance in selected market subcategories that are characteristically low-severity and short-tailed risks. We focus on marketing, distributing, underwriting and servicing property/casualty insurance products that require specialized underwriting expertise or market knowledge. We believe this approach provides us the best opportunity to achieve favorable policy terms and pricing. The insurance policies we produce are written by our five insurance company subsidiaries as well as unaffiliated insurers.

We market, distribute, underwrite and service our property/casualty insurance products through five business units, each of which has a specific focus. Our Standard Commercial business unit primarily handles standard commercial insurance, our E&S Commercial business unit concentrates on excess and surplus lines commercial insurance, our General Aviation business unit specializes in general aviation insurance, our Excess & Umbrella business unit handles excess commercial automobile and commercial umbrella risks on both an admitted and non-admitted basis, and our Personal Lines business unit focuses on non-standard personal automobile insurance and complementary personal insurance products and services. Our business is geographically concentrated in the southcentral and northwest regions of the United States, except for our General Aviation and Excess & Umbrella business, which is written on a national basis.

Each business unit has its own management team with significant experience in distributing products to its target markets and proven success in achieving underwriting profitability and providing efficient claims management. Each business unit is responsible for marketing, distribution, underwriting and claims management while we provide capital management, reinsurance, actuarial, investment, financial reporting, technology and legal services and back office support at the corporate level. We believe this approach optimizes our operating results by allowing us to effectively penetrate our selected specialty and niche markets while maintaining operational controls, managing risks, controlling overhead and efficiently allocating our capital across operating units.

The retained premium produced by our operating units is supported by our insurance company subsidiaries, which are American Hallmark Insurance Company of Texas (“AHIC”), Hallmark Insurance Company (“HIC”), Hallmark Specialty Insurance Company (“HSIC”), Hallmark County Mutual Insurance Company (“HCM”) and State Auto National Insurance Company (for which regulatory approval is pending to be renamed Hallmark National Insurance Company) (“HNIC”). AHIC, HIC, and HSIC have entered into a pooling arrangement, pursuant to which AHIC retains 46.0% of the net premiums written, HIC retains 34.1% of the net premiums written and HSIC retains 19.9% of the net premiums written. A.M. Best Company (“A.M. Best”), a nationally recognized insurance industry rating service and publisher, has pooled its ratings of these three insurance company subsidiaries and assigned a financial strength rating of “A-” (Excellent) and an issuer credit rating of “a-” to each of these individual insurance company subsidiaries and to the pool formed by these three insurance company subsidiaries. Also, A.M. Best has assigned a financial strength rating of “A-” (Excellent) and an issuer credit rating of “a-” to each of HCM and HNIC.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our common stock involves a number of risks. Before you decide to buy shares of our common stock, you should carefully consider the risk factors set forth below, in any applicable prospectus supplement and in the materials incorporated by reference herein. See, “Information Incorporated by Reference.” Risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also affect our business operations.

Our success depends on our ability to price accurately the risks we underwrite.

Our results of operations and financial condition depend on our ability to underwrite and set premium rates accurately for a wide variety of risks. Adequate rates are necessary to generate premiums sufficient to pay losses, loss settlement expenses and underwriting expenses and to earn a profit. To price our products accurately, we must collect and properly analyze a substantial amount of data; develop, test and apply appropriate pricing techniques; closely monitor and timely recognize changes in trends; and project both severity and frequency of losses with reasonable accuracy. Our ability to undertake these efforts successfully, and as a result price our products accurately, is subject to a number of risks and uncertainties, some of which are outside our control, including:

- the availability of sufficient reliable data and our ability to properly analyze available data;
- the uncertainties that inherently characterize estimates and assumptions;
- our selection and application of appropriate pricing techniques; and
- changes in applicable legal liability standards and in the civil litigation system generally.

Consequently, we could underprice risks, which would adversely affect our profit margins, or we could overprice risks, which could reduce our sales volume and competitiveness. In either case, our profitability could be materially and adversely affected.

Our results may fluctuate as a result of cyclical changes in the property/casualty insurance industry.

Our revenue is primarily attributable to property/casualty insurance, which as an industry is cyclical in nature and has historically been characterized by soft markets followed by hard markets. A soft market is a period of relatively high levels of price competition, less restrictive underwriting standards and generally low premium rates. A hard market is a period of capital shortages resulting in lack of insurance availability, relatively low levels of competition, more selective underwriting of risks and relatively high premium rates. If we find it necessary to reduce premiums or limit premium increases due to competitive pressures on pricing in a softening market, we may experience a reduction in our premiums written and in our profit margins and revenues, which could adversely affect our financial results.

Estimating reserves is inherently uncertain. If our loss reserves are not adequate, it will have an unfavorable impact on our results.

We maintain loss reserves to cover our estimated ultimate liability for unpaid losses and loss adjustment expenses for reported and unreported claims incurred as of the end of each accounting period. Reserves represent management's estimates of what the ultimate settlement and administration of claims will cost and are not reviewed by an independent actuary. These estimates, which generally involve actuarial projections, are based on management's assessment of facts and circumstances then known, as well as estimates of future trends in claim severity and frequency, judicial theories of liability, and other factors. These variables are affected by both internal and external events, such as changes in claims handling procedures, inflation, judicial trends and legislative changes. Many of these factors are not quantifiable. Additionally, there may be a significant lag between the occurrence of an event and the time it is reported to us. The inherent uncertainties of estimating reserves are greater for certain types of liabilities, particularly those in which the various considerations affecting the type of claim are subject to change and in which long periods of time may elapse before a definitive determination of liability is made. Reserve estimates are continually refined in a regular and ongoing process as experience develops and further claims are reported and settled. Adjustments to reserves are reflected in the results of the periods in which such estimates are changed. Because setting reserves is inherently uncertain, there can be no assurance that the current reserves will prove adequate.

Our failure to maintain favorable financial strength ratings could negatively impact our ability to compete successfully.

Third-party rating agencies assess and rate the claims-paying ability of insurers based upon criteria established by the agencies. These financial strength ratings are used by policyholders, insurers, reinsurers and insurance and reinsurance intermediaries as an important means of assessing the financial strength and quality of insurers. These ratings are not evaluations directed to potential purchasers of our common stock and are not recommendations to buy, sell or hold our common stock. Ratings are subject to change at any time and can be revised downward or revoked at

the sole discretion of the rating agencies.

We believe that the ratings assigned to our insurance subsidiaries by A.M. Best are an important factor in marketing our products. Our ability to retain our existing business and to attract new business in our insurance operations depends largely on these ratings. Our failure to maintain our ratings, or any other adverse development with respect to our ratings, could cause our current and future independent agents and insureds to choose to transact their business with more highly rated competitors. If A.M. Best downgrades our ratings or publicly indicates that our ratings are under review, it is likely that we would not be able to compete as effectively with our competitors, and our ability to sell insurance policies could decline. If that happens, our sales and earnings would decrease. For example, many of our agencies and insureds have guidelines that require us to have an A.M. Best financial strength rating of “A-” (Excellent) or higher. A reduction of our A.M. Best rating below “A-” would prevent us from issuing policies to insureds or potential insureds with such ratings requirements. Because lenders and reinsurers will use our A.M. Best ratings as a factor in deciding whether to transact business with us, the failure of our insurance company subsidiaries to maintain their current ratings could dissuade a lender or reinsurance company from conducting business with us or might increase our interest or reinsurance costs. In addition, a ratings downgrade by A.M. Best below “A-” would require us to post collateral in support of our obligations under certain of our reinsurance agreements pursuant to which we assume business.

The loss of key executives could disrupt our business.

Our success will depend in part upon the continued service of certain key executives. Our success will also depend on our ability to attract and retain additional executives and personnel. We do not have employment agreements with our Chief Executive Officer or any of our executive officers. The loss of key personnel, or our inability to recruit and retain additional qualified personnel, could cause disruption in our business and could prevent us from fully implementing our business strategies, which could materially and adversely affect our business, growth and profitability.

Our industry is very competitive, which may unfavorably impact our results of operations.

The property/casualty insurance market, our primary source of revenue, is highly competitive and, except for regulatory considerations, has very few barriers to entry. According to A.M. Best, there were 3,305 property/casualty insurance companies and 2,091 property/casualty insurance groups operating in North America as of July 16, 2010. Our Standard Commercial business unit competes with a variety of large national standard commercial lines carriers such as The Hartford, Travelers, Cincinnati Financial Corporation and Liberty Mutual, as well as numerous smaller regional companies. The primary competition for our E&S Commercial business unit includes such carriers as Dallas National Insurance Company, Atlantic Casualty Insurance Company, Colony Insurance Company, Burlington Insurance Company, Markel, Travelers, The Hartford, Great West Casualty Company, Sentry Insurance and QBE Insurance Group. Our General Aviation business unit considers its primary competitors to be Houston Casualty Corp., Phoenix Aviation, W. Brown & Company, AIG, Allianz Aviation Managers and Starr Aviation. The primary competitors of our Excess & Umbrella business unit include Lexington Insurance Company, First Mercury Insurance Company, Axis Insurance Company, Gemini Insurance Company and, to a lesser extent, a number of national standard lines carriers such as Travelers and Liberty Mutual. Although our Personal lines business unit competes with large national insurers such as Allstate, State Farm and Progressive, as a participant in the non-standard personal automobile marketplace its competition is most directly associated with numerous regional companies and managing general agencies. Our competitors include entities which have, or are affiliated with entities which have, greater financial and other resources than we have. In addition, competitors may attempt to increase market share by lowering rates. In that case, we could experience reductions in our underwriting margins, or sales of our insurance policies could decline as customers purchase lower-priced products from our competitors. Losing business to competitors offering similar products at lower prices, or having other competitive advantages, could adversely affect our results of operations.

Our results may be unfavorably impacted if we are unable to obtain adequate reinsurance.

As part of our overall risk and capacity management strategy, we purchase reinsurance for significant amounts of risk, especially catastrophe risks that we and our insurance company subsidiaries underwrite. Our catastrophe and non-catastrophe reinsurance facilities are generally subject to annual renewal. We may be unable to maintain our current reinsurance facilities or to obtain other reinsurance facilities in adequate amounts and at favorable rates. The amount, availability and cost of reinsurance are subject to prevailing market conditions beyond our control, and may affect our ability to write additional premiums as well as our profitability. If we are unable to obtain adequate reinsurance protection for the risks we have underwritten, we will either be exposed to greater losses from these risks or we will reduce the level of business that we underwrite, which will reduce our revenue.

If the companies that provide our reinsurance do not pay our claims in a timely manner, we could incur severe losses.

We purchase reinsurance by transferring, or ceding, part of the risk we have assumed to a reinsurance company in exchange for part of the premium we receive in connection with the risk. Although reinsurance makes the reinsurer liable to us to the extent the risk is transferred or ceded to the reinsurer, it does not relieve us of our liability to our

policyholders. Accordingly, we bear credit risk with respect to our reinsurers. We cannot assure that our reinsurers will pay all of our reinsurance claims, or that they will pay our claims on a timely basis. If any of our reinsurers are unable or unwilling to pay amounts they owe us in a timely fashion, we could suffer a significant loss or a shortage of liquidity, which would have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations.

Catastrophic losses are unpredictable and may adversely affect our results of operations, liquidity and financial condition.

Property/casualty insurance companies are subject to claims arising out of catastrophes that may have a significant effect on their results of operations, liquidity and financial condition. Catastrophes can be caused by various events, including hurricanes, windstorms, earthquakes, hail storms, explosions, severe winter weather and fires, and may include man-made events, such as terrorist attacks. The incidence, frequency, and severity of catastrophes are inherently unpredictable. The extent of losses from a catastrophe is a function of both the total amount of insured exposure in the area affected by the event and the severity of the event. Claims from catastrophic events could reduce our net income, cause substantial volatility in our financial results for any fiscal quarter or year or otherwise adversely affect our financial condition, liquidity or results of operations. Catastrophes may also negatively affect our ability to write new business. Increases in the value and geographic concentration of insured property and the effects of inflation could increase the severity of claims from catastrophic events in the future.

Catastrophe models may not accurately predict future losses.

Along with other insurers in the industry, we use models developed by third-party vendors in assessing our exposure to catastrophe losses that assume various conditions and probability scenarios. However, these models do not necessarily accurately predict future losses or accurately measure losses currently incurred. Catastrophe models, which have been evolving since the early 1990's, use historical information about various catastrophes and detailed information about our in-force business. While we use this information in connection with our pricing and risk management activities, there are limitations with respect to their usefulness in predicting losses in any reporting period. Examples of these limitations are significant variations in estimates between models and modelers and material increases and decreases in model results due to changes and refinements of the underlying data elements and assumptions. Such limitations lead to questionable predictive capability and post-event measurements that have not been well understood or proven to be sufficiently reliable. In addition, the models are not necessarily reflective of company or state-specific policy language, demand surge for labor and materials or loss settlement expenses, all of which are subject to wide variation by catastrophe. Because the occurrence and severity of catastrophes are inherently unpredictable and may vary significantly from year to year, historical results of operations may not be indicative of future results of operations.

We are subject to comprehensive regulation, and our results may be unfavorably impacted by these regulations.

We are subject to comprehensive governmental regulation and supervision. Most insurance regulations are designed to protect the interests of policyholders rather than of the stockholders and other investors of the insurance companies. These regulations, generally administered by the department of insurance in each state in which we do business, relate to, among other things:

- approval of policy forms and rates;
- standards of solvency, including risk-based capital measurements, which are a measure developed by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners and used by the state insurance regulators to identify insurance companies that potentially are inadequately capitalized;
- licensing of insurers and their agents;
- restrictions on the nature, quality and concentration of investments;
- restrictions on the ability of insurance company subsidiaries to pay dividends;

- restrictions on transactions between insurance company subsidiaries and their affiliates;
 - required methods of accounting;
 - periodic examinations of operations and finances;
- the use of non-public consumer information and related privacy issues;
- the use of credit history in underwriting and rating;

- limitations on the ability to charge policy fees;
- the acquisition or disposition of an insurance company or of any company controlling an insurance company;
- involuntary assignments of high-risk policies, participation in reinsurance facilities and underwriting associations, assessments and other governmental charges;
- restrictions on the cancellation or non-renewal of policies and, in certain jurisdictions, withdrawal from writing certain lines of business;
 - the prescribed form and content of records of financial condition to be filed;
 - required reserves for unearned premium, losses and other purposes; and
- with respect to premium finance business, the federal Truth-in-Lending Act and similar state statutes. In states where specific statutes have not been enacted, premium finance is generally subject to state usury laws that are applicable to consumer loans.

State insurance departments also conduct periodic examinations of the affairs of insurance companies and require filing of annual and other reports relating to the financial condition of insurance companies, holding company issues and other matters. Our business depends on compliance with applicable laws and regulations and our ability to maintain valid licenses and approvals for our operations. Regulatory authorities may deny or revoke licenses for various reasons, including violations of regulations. Changes in the level of regulation of the insurance industry or changes in laws or regulations themselves or interpretations by regulatory authorities could have a material adverse effect on our operations. In addition, we could face individual, group and class action lawsuits by our policyholders and others for alleged violations of certain state laws and regulations. Each of these regulatory risks could have an adverse effect on our profitability.

State statutes limit the aggregate amount of dividends that our subsidiaries may pay Hallmark, thereby limiting its funds to pay expenses and dividends.

Hallmark is a holding company and a legal entity separate and distinct from its subsidiaries. As a holding company without significant operations of its own, Hallmark's principal sources of funds are dividends and other sources of funds from its subsidiaries. State insurance laws limit the ability of Hallmark's insurance company subsidiaries to pay dividends and require our insurance company subsidiaries to maintain specified minimum levels of statutory capital and surplus. The aggregate maximum amount of dividends permitted by law to be paid by an insurance company does not necessarily define an insurance company's actual ability to pay dividends. Our actual ability to pay dividends may be further constrained by business and regulatory considerations, such as the impact of dividends on surplus, by our competitive position and by the amount of premiums that we can write. State insurance regulators have broad discretion to limit the payment of dividends by insurance companies and Hallmark's right to participate in any distribution of assets of one of our insurance company subsidiaries is subject to prior claims of policyholders and creditors except to the extent that its rights, if any, as a creditor are recognized. Consequently, Hallmark's ability to pay debts, expenses and cash dividends to our stockholders may be limited.

Our insurance company subsidiaries are subject to minimum capital and surplus requirements. Failure to meet these requirements could subject us to regulatory action.

Our insurance company subsidiaries are subject to minimum capital and surplus requirements imposed under the laws of their respective states of domicile and each state in which they issue policies. Any failure by one of our insurance

company subsidiaries to meet minimum capital and surplus requirements imposed by applicable state law will subject it to corrective action, which may include requiring adoption of a comprehensive financial plan, revocation of its license to sell insurance products or placing the subsidiary under state regulatory control. Any new minimum capital and surplus requirements adopted in the future may require us to increase the capital and surplus of our insurance company subsidiaries, which we may not be able to do.

We are subject to assessments and other surcharges from state guaranty funds, mandatory reinsurance arrangements and state insurance facilities, which may reduce our profitability.

Virtually all states require insurers licensed to do business therein to bear a portion of the unfunded obligations of impaired or insolvent insurance companies. These obligations are funded by assessments, which are levied by guaranty associations within the state, up to prescribed limits, on all member insurers in the state on the basis of the proportionate share of the premiums written by member insurers in the lines of business in which the impaired, insolvent or failed insurer was engaged. Accordingly, the assessments levied on us by the states in which we are licensed to write insurance may increase as we increase our premiums written. In addition, as a condition to the ability to conduct business in certain states, insurance companies are required to participate in mandatory reinsurance funds. The effect of these assessments and mandatory reinsurance arrangements, or changes in them, could reduce our profitability in any given period or limit our ability to grow our business.

We monitor developments with respect to various state facilities, such as the Texas FAIR Plan and the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association. The impact of any catastrophe experience on these facilities could result in the facilities recognizing a financial deficit or a financial deficit greater than the level currently estimated. They may, in turn, have the ability to assess participating insurers when financial deficits occur, adversely affecting our results of operations. While these facilities are generally designed so that the ultimate cost is borne by policyholders, the exposure to assessments and the availability of recoupments or premium rate increases from these facilities may not offset each other in our financial statements. Moreover, even if they do offset each other, they may not offset each other in financial statements for the same fiscal period due to the ultimate timing of the assessments and recoupments or premium rate increases, as well as the possibility of policies not being renewed in subsequent years.

Adverse securities market conditions can have a significant and negative impact on our investment portfolio.

Our results of operations depend in part on the performance of our invested assets. A substantial portion of our investment portfolio is invested in fixed-income securities. Certain risks are inherent in connection with fixed-income securities, including loss upon default and price volatility in reaction to changes in interest rates and general market factors. In general, the fair market value of a portfolio of fixed-income securities increases or decreases inversely with changes in the market interest rates, while net investment income realized from future investments in fixed-income securities increases or decreases along with interest rates. In addition, a portion of our fixed-income securities have call or prepayment options. This subjects us to reinvestment risk should interest rates fall and issuers call their securities. Furthermore, actual net investment income and/or cash flows from investments that carry prepayment risk, such as mortgage-backed and other asset-backed securities, may differ from those anticipated at the time of investment as a result of interest rate fluctuations. An investment has prepayment risk when there is a risk that cash flows from the repayment of principal might occur earlier than anticipated because of declining interest rates or later than anticipated because of rising interest rates. Our fixed-income securities are also subject to credit risk. If any of the issuers of our fixed-income securities suffer financial setbacks, the ratings on the fixed-income securities could fall (with a concurrent fall in market value) and, in a worst case scenario, the issuer could default on its obligations. Future changes in the fair market value of our available-for-sale securities will be reflected in other comprehensive income. Similar treatment is not available for liabilities. Therefore, interest rate fluctuations could adversely affect our stockholders' equity, total comprehensive income and/or our cash flows.

We rely on independent agents and specialty brokers to market our products and their failure to do so would have a material adverse effect on our results of operations.

We market and distribute our insurance programs exclusively through independent insurance agents and specialty insurance brokers. As a result, our business depends in large part on the marketing efforts of these agents and brokers and on our ability to offer insurance products and services that meet the requirements of the agents, the brokers and

their customers. However, these agents and brokers are not obligated to sell or promote our products and many sell or promote competitors' insurance products in addition to our products. Some of our competitors have higher financial strength ratings, offer a larger variety of products, set lower prices for insurance coverage and/or offer higher commissions than we do. Therefore, we may not be able to continue to attract and retain independent agents and brokers to sell our insurance products. The failure or inability of independent agents and brokers to market our insurance products successfully could have a material adverse impact on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

We may experience difficulty in integrating future acquisitions into our operations.

The successful integration of any newly acquired businesses into our operations will require, among other things, the retention and assimilation of their key management, sales and other personnel; the coordination of their lines of insurance products and services; the adaptation of their technology, information systems and other processes; and the retention and transition of their customers. Unexpected difficulties in integrating any acquisition could result in increased expenses and the diversion of management time and resources. If we do not successfully integrate any acquired business into our operations, we may not realize the anticipated benefits of the acquisition, which could have a material adverse impact on our financial condition and results of operations. Further, any potential acquisitions may require significant capital outlays and, if we issue equity or convertible debt securities to pay for an acquisition, the issuance may be dilutive to our existing stockholders.

Our geographic concentration ties our performance to the business, economic and regulatory conditions of certain states.

Except for our General Aviation and Excess & Umbrella business units, our property/casualty insurance business is geographically concentrated in the southcentral and northwest regions of the United States. Our revenues and profitability are subject to the prevailing regulatory, legal, economic, political, demographic, competitive, weather and other conditions in the principal states in which we do business. Changes in any of these conditions could make it less attractive for us to do business in such states and would have a more pronounced effect on us compared to companies that are more geographically diversified. In addition, our exposure to severe losses from localized natural perils, such as windstorms or hailstorms, is increased in those areas where we have written significant numbers of property/casualty insurance policies.

The exclusions and limitations in our policies may not be enforceable.

Many of the policies we issue include exclusions or other conditions that define and limit coverage, which exclusions and conditions are designed to manage our exposure to certain types of risks and expanding theories of legal liability. In addition, many of our policies limit the period during which a policyholder may bring a claim under the policy, which period in many cases is shorter than the statutory period under which these claims can be brought by our policyholders. While these exclusions and limitations help us assess and control our loss exposure, it is possible that a court or regulatory authority could nullify or void an exclusion or limitation, or legislation could be enacted modifying or barring the use of these exclusions and limitations. This could result in higher than anticipated losses and loss adjustment expenses by extending coverage beyond our underwriting intent or increasing the number or size of claims, which could have a material adverse effect on our operating results. In some instances, these changes may not become apparent until some time after we have issued the insurance policies that are affected by the changes. As a result, the full extent of liability under our insurance contracts may not be known for many years after a policy is issued.

We rely on our information technology and telecommunications systems and the failure or disruption of these systems could disrupt our operations and adversely affect our results of operations.

Our business is highly dependent upon the successful and uninterrupted functioning of our information technology and telecommunications systems. We rely on these systems to process new and renewal business, provide customer service, make claims payments and facilitate collections and cancellations, as well as to perform actuarial and other analytical functions necessary for pricing and product development. Our systems could fail of their own accord or might be disrupted by factors such as natural disasters, power disruptions or surges, computer hackers or terrorist attacks. Failure or disruption of these systems for any reason could interrupt our business and adversely affect our results of operations.

USE OF PROCEEDS

All net proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock by the selling stockholders under this prospectus will go to the selling stockholders. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock by the selling stockholders.

SELLING STOCKHOLDERS

Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund I, L.P., Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund II, L.P., or their respective pledgees, donees, transferees or other successors in interest, may from time to time offer and sell any or all of the shares of our common stock offered by them under this prospectus. These selling stockholders may also sell, transfer or otherwise dispose of some or all of their shares of our common stock in transactions exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended. We do not know when or in what amounts the selling stockholders may offer shares of our common stock for sale under this prospectus. We will pay all expenses incurred with respect to the registration and sale of the shares of our common stock offered by the selling stockholders under this prospectus, other than underwriting fees, discounts and commissions, which will be borne by the selling stockholders.

The table below sets forth information as of January 13, 2011, regarding beneficial ownership of shares of our common stock by Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund I, L.P. and Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund II, L.P.

| Name of Beneficial Owner | Shares Beneficially Owned Prior to This Offering | | Shares Offered | Shares Beneficially Owned After This Offering | |
|---|--|------------|----------------|---|------------|
| | Number | Percent(1) | | Number(2) | Percent(2) |
| Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund I, L.P. | 1,643,965 | 8.2 | 1,643,965 | -0- | -0- |
| Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund II, L.P. | 1,630,865 | 8.1 | 1,630,865 | -0- | -0- |

(1) Based on 20,124,169 shares of our common stock outstanding as of January 13, 2011.

(2) Assumes that the selling stockholder sells all of the shares of our common stock offered under this prospectus and neither acquires nor disposes of any other shares of our common stock. The selling stockholders are not obligated to sell any of their shares of our common stock.

We are registering these shares pursuant to a Registration Rights Agreement entered into with each of Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund I, L.P. and Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund II, L.P. on January 27, 2006, in connection with a private placement of our securities. Each of Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund I, L.P. and Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund II, L.P. is an affiliate of our Executive Chairman, Mark E. Schwarz. Mr. Schwarz is the managing member of Newcastle Capital Group LLC, which is the general partner of Newcastle Capital Management, L.P., which is the general partner of Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund I, L.P. and Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund II, L.P., the address for all of which is 200 Crescent Court, Suite 1400, Dallas, Texas 75201. As a result of these relationships, Mr. Schwarz may be deemed to beneficially own all shares of our common stock which are offered for sale by Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund I, L.P. and Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund II, L.P. under this prospectus.

Newcastle Capital Management, L.P. is also the general partner of Newcastle Partners, L.P. and Newcastle Focus Fund II, L.P. Mr. Schwarz and Newcastle Capital Group, LLC are also the sole shareholders of DSC Services, Inc., which in turn is the sole owner of Detroit Stoker Company, LLC. As a result of these relationships, as of January 13, 2011, Mr. Schwarz may be deemed to beneficially own 7,744,339 shares, or 38.4%, of our common stock, consisting of 51,526 shares directly owned by Mr. Schwarz, 47,738 shares which may be acquired by Mr. Schwarz pursuant to stock options exercisable within 60 days, 3,539,075 shares owned by Newcastle Partners, L.P., the 1,643,965 shares owned by Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund I, L.P., the 1,630,865 shares owned by Newcastle Special Opportunity

Fund II, L.P., 37,280 shares owned by Newcastle Focus Fund II, L.P. and 793,890 shares owned by Detroit Stoker Company, LLC. If Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund I, L.P. and Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund II, L.P. sell all of their shares of our common stock offered under this prospectus, none of Mr. Schwarz or his affiliates acquires or disposes of any other shares of our common stock and there is no increase or decrease in the number of outstanding shares of our common stock subsequent to January 13, 2011, the beneficial ownership of Mr. Schwarz will be reduced to 4,469,509 shares, or 22.2%, of our common stock.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We are registering the shares offered by this prospectus on behalf of the selling stockholders. The selling stockholders, which as used herein include donees, pledgees, transferees or other successors-in-interest selling shares of common stock or interests in shares of common stock received after the date of this prospectus from a selling stockholder as a gift, pledge, partnership distribution or other transfer, may, from time to time, sell, transfer or otherwise dispose of any or all of their shares of common stock or interests in shares of common stock on any stock exchange, market or trading facility on which the shares are traded or in private transactions. These dispositions may be at fixed prices, at prevailing market prices at the time of sale, at prices related to the prevailing market price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale or at negotiated prices.

The selling stockholders may use any one or more of the following methods when disposing of shares or interests therein:

- ordinary brokerage transactions and transactions in which the broker-dealer solicits purchasers;

• block trades in which the broker-dealer will attempt to sell the shares as agent, but may position and resell a portion of the block as principal to facilitate the transaction;

- purchases by a broker-dealer as principal and resale by the broker-dealer for its account;

- an exchange distribution in accordance with the rules of the applicable exchange;

- privately negotiated transactions;

- short sales;

• through the writing or settlement of options or other hedging transactions, whether through an options exchange or otherwise;

• broker-dealers may agree with the selling stockholders to sell a specified number of such shares at a stipulated price per share;

- a combination of any such methods of sale; and

- any other method permitted pursuant to applicable law.

The selling stockholders may, from time to time, pledge or grant a security interest in some or all of the shares of common stock owned by them and, if they default in the performance of their secured obligations, the pledgees or secured parties may offer and sell the shares of common stock, from time to time, under this prospectus, or under an amendment to this prospectus under Rule 424(b)(3) or other applicable provision of the Securities Act amending the list of selling stockholders to include the pledgee, transferee or other successors in interest as selling stockholders under this prospectus. The selling stockholders also may transfer the shares of common stock in other circumstances, in which case the transferees, pledgees or other successors in interest will be the selling beneficial owners for purposes of this prospectus.

In connection with the sale of our common stock or interests therein, the selling stockholders may enter into hedging transactions with broker-dealers or other financial institutions, which may in turn engage in short sales of the common stock in the course of hedging the positions they assume. The selling stockholders may also sell shares of our

common stock short and deliver these securities to close out their short positions, or loan or pledge the common stock to broker-dealers that in turn may sell these securities. The selling stockholders may also enter into option or other transactions with broker-dealers or other financial institutions or the creation of one or more derivative securities which require the delivery to such broker-dealer or other financial institution of shares offered by this prospectus, which shares such broker-dealer or other financial institution may resell pursuant to this prospectus (as supplemented or amended to reflect such transaction).

The aggregate proceeds to the selling stockholders from the sale of the common stock offered by them will be the purchase price of the common stock less discounts or commissions, if any. Each of the selling stockholders reserves the right to accept and, together with their agents from time to time, to reject, in whole or in part, any proposed purchase of common stock to be made directly or through agents. We will not receive any of the proceeds from this offering.

The selling stockholders also may resell all or a portion of the shares in open market transactions in reliance upon Rule 144 under the Securities Act of 1933, provided that they meet the criteria and conform to the requirements of that rule.

The selling stockholders and any broker-dealers that act in connection with the sale of securities might be deemed to be “underwriters” within the meaning of Section 2(11) of the Securities Act, and any commissions received by such broker-dealers and any profit on the resale of the securities sold by them while acting as principals might be deemed to be underwriting discounts or commissions under the Securities Act.

To the extent required, the shares of our common stock to be sold, the names of the selling stockholders, the respective purchase prices and public offering prices, the names of any agent, dealer or underwriter, and any applicable commissions or discounts with respect to a particular offer will be set forth in an accompanying prospectus supplement or, if appropriate, a post-effective amendment to the registration statement that includes this prospectus.

In order to comply with the securities laws of some states, if applicable, the common stock may be sold in those jurisdictions only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, in some states the common stock may not be sold unless it has been registered or qualified for sale or an exemption from registration or qualification requirements is available and is complied with.

We have advised the selling stockholders that the anti-manipulation rules of Regulation M under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, may apply to sales of shares in the market and to the activities of the selling stockholders and their affiliates. In addition, we will make copies of this prospectus (as it may be supplemented or amended from time to time) available to the selling stockholders for the purpose of satisfying the prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the shares of our common stock offered hereby will be passed upon for us by McGuire, Craddock & Strother, P.C., Dallas, Texas.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements and schedules of Hallmark Financial Services, Inc. and subsidiaries as of December 31, 2009 and 2008, and for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2009, have been incorporated by reference herein in reliance upon the report of KPMG LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, incorporated by reference herein, and upon the authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing. The audit report dated March 25, 2010 refers to a change in our method of evaluating other-than-temporary impairment of debt securities due to the adoption of new accounting requirements issued by the Financial Accounting Standards Board, as of April 1, 2009.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

This prospectus is part of a registration statement on Form S-3 filed by us with the SEC relating to the shares of our common stock offered under this prospectus. As permitted by SEC rules, this prospectus does not contain all of the information contained in the registration statement and accompanying exhibits and schedules filed by us with the SEC. The registration statement, exhibits and schedules provide additional information about us and our common stock. The registration statement, exhibits and schedules are available at the SEC’s public reference rooms or the SEC website at www.sec.gov.

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. These documents are available for inspection and copying by the public at the Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. Our filings are also available to the public on the internet through the SEC website at www.sec.gov. You may also find our SEC filings and other relevant information about us on our website at www.hallmarkgrp.com. However, the information on our website is not a part of this prospectus.

INFORMATION INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to “incorporate by reference” into this prospectus the information we file with the SEC. This permits us to disclose important information to you by referencing these filed documents. Any information referenced in this way is considered part of this prospectus and any prospectus supplement. Any information filed with the SEC after the date on the cover of this prospectus or any prospectus supplement will automatically be deemed to update and supersede this prospectus and such prospectus supplement. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future filings made by us with the SEC with file number 001-11252 under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, until all of the securities described in this prospectus are sold:

- our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009;
- our definitive proxy statement filed on May 4, 2010;
- our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, June 30 and September 30, 2010;
- our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on January 14, January 25, February 2, February 26, March 25, April 8, May 14, May 24, June 1, June 17, August 10, August 17, August 18, September 3, October 19 and November 12, 2010, and January 4, 2011; and
- the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on August 9, 2005, including all amendments and reports filed for purposes of updating such description.

You can request a copy of any document incorporated by reference in this prospectus, at no cost, by writing or telephoning us at the following:

Hallmark Financial Services, Inc.
777 Main Street, Suite 1000
Fort Worth, Texas 76102
Attention: Mark J. Morrison, President
Telephone: (817) 348-1600

PART II
INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS

Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution.

The following table sets forth the expenses expected to be incurred in connection with this registration statement. All such expenses will be payable by Hallmark Financial Services, Inc. All items below are estimates, other than the SEC registration fee.

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| SEC registration fee | \$ 3,441 |
| Printing expenses | \$ 1,000 |
| Accounting fees and expenses | \$ 12,000 |
| Legal fees and expenses | \$ 15,000 |
| Miscellaneous | \$ 3,559 |
| Total | \$ 35,000 |

Item 15. Indemnification of Directors and Officers.

The Nevada General Corporation Law (“NGCL”) provides that a director or officer is not individually liable to the corporation or its stockholders or creditors for any damages as a result of any act or failure to act in his capacity as a director or officer unless (i) such act or omission constituted a breach of his/her fiduciary duties as a director or officer, and (ii) his/her breach of those duties involved intentional misconduct, fraud or a knowing violation of law. Under the NGCL, a corporation may indemnify directors and officers, as well as other employees and individuals, against any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, except an action by or in the right of the corporation, by reason of the fact that he/she is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation so long as such person acted in good faith and in a manner which he/she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his/her conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, does not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner which he/she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, or that, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, he/she had reasonable cause to believe that his/her conduct was unlawful.

The NGCL further provides that indemnification may not be made for any claim as to which such a person has been adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction, after exhaustion of all appeals therefrom, to be liable to the corporation or for amounts paid in settlement to the corporation, unless and only to the extent that the court in which the action or suit was brought or other court of competent jurisdiction determines upon application that, in view of all the circumstances of the case, the person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnity for such expenses as the court deems proper. To the extent that a director, officer, employee or agent of a corporation has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit or proceeding or in defense of any claim, issue or matter therein, the corporation must indemnify him/her against expenses, including attorneys’ fees, actually and reasonably incurred in connection with the defense. The NGCL provides that this is not exclusive of other rights to which those seeking indemnification may be entitled under any bylaw, agreement, vote of stockholders or disinterested directors or otherwise.

The registrant's articles of incorporation provide that the directors and officers will not be personally liable to the registrant or its stockholders for monetary damages for breach of their fiduciary duty as a director or officer, except for liability of a director or officer for acts or omissions involving intentional misconduct, fraud or a knowing violation of law, or the payment of dividends in violation of the NGCL. The registrant's bylaws and contractual

arrangements with certain of its directors and officers provide that the registrant is required to indemnify its directors and officers to the fullest extent permitted by law. The registrant's bylaws and these contractual arrangements also require the registrant to advance expenses incurred by a director or officer in connection with the defense of any proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the director or officer to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined by a court of competent jurisdiction that he/she is not entitled to be indemnified by the registrant. The registrant's bylaws also permit the registrant to purchase and maintain errors and omissions insurance on behalf of any director or officer for any liability arising out of his/her actions in a representative capacity. The registrant does not presently maintain any such errors and omissions insurance for the benefit of its directors and officers.

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Item 16. Exhibits.

Exhibit # Description

- 1(a)+ Form of Underwriting Agreement
- 4(a) Specimen certificate for Common Stock, \$0.18 par value per share, of the registrant (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the registrant's Post-Effective Amendment No. 1 to Registration Statement on Form S-1 filed October 3, 2006).
- 4(b) Indenture dated as of June 21, 2005, between Hallmark Financial Services, Inc. and JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed June 27, 2005).
- 4(c) Amended and Restated Declaration of Trust of Hallmark Statutory Trust I dated as of June 21, 2005, among Hallmark Financial Services, Inc., as sponsor, Chase Bank USA, National Association, as Delaware trustee, and JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association, as institutional trustee, and Mark Schwarz and Mark Morrison, as administrators (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.2 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed June 27, 2005).
- 4(d) Form of Junior Subordinated Debt Security Due 2035 (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed June 27, 2005).
- 4(e) Form of Capital Security Certificate (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.2 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed June 27, 2005).
- 4(f) Form of Registration Rights Agreement dated January 27, 2006, between Hallmark Financial Services, Inc. and Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund I, L.P. and Newcastle Special Opportunity Fund II, L.P. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed February 2, 2006).
- 4(g) Indenture dated as of August 23, 2007, between Hallmark Financial Services, Inc. and The Bank of New York Trust Company, National Association (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed August 24, 2007).
- 4(h) Amended and Restated Declaration of Trust of Hallmark Statutory Trust II dated as of August 23, 2007, among Hallmark Financial Services, Inc., as sponsor, The Bank of New York (Delaware), as Delaware trustee, and The Bank of New York Trust Company, National Association, as institutional trustee, and Mark Schwarz and Mark Morrison, as administrators (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.2 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed August 24, 2007).
- 4(i) Form of Junior Subordinated Debt Security Due 2037 (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed August 24, 2007).
- 4(j) Form of Capital Security Certificate (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.2 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed August 24, 2007).
- 4(k) First Restated Credit Agreement dated January 27, 2006, between Hallmark Financial Services, Inc. and The Frost National Bank (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the registrant's Current Report on

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Form 8-K filed February 2, 2006).

- 4(l) Seventh Amendment to First Restated Credit Agreement dated May 27, 2010, between Hallmark Financial Services, Inc. and The Frost National Bank (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed June 17, 2010).
- 5* Opinion of McGuire, Craddock & Strother, P.C.
- 23(a)* Consent of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm.
- 23(b)* Consent of McGuire, Craddock & Strother, P.C. (included in opinion filed as Exhibit 5).
- 24* Power of Attorney (included on signature page hereto).

+ To be filed as an exhibit to a Current Report on Form 8-K in connection with a specific offering, if applicable.

* Filed herewith.

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Item 17. Undertakings.

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

(1) To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:

(i) to include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act of 1933;

(ii) to reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of the registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than 20% change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the "Calculation of Registration Fee" table in the effective registration statement; and

(iii) to include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the registration statement or any material change to such information in the registration statement;

Provided, however, that paragraphs 1(i), 1(ii) and 1(iii) do not apply if the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the Commission by the registrant pursuant to section 13 or section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in the registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of the registration statement.

(2) That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

(3) To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.

(4) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser:

(i) Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and

(ii) Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by section 10(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof. Provided, however, that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into

the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date.

(5) That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities, the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:

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(i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;

(ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;

(iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and

(iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.

(6) That, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each filing of the registrant's annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934) that is incorporated by reference in this registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

(7) Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the Securities and Exchange Commission such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

(8) That, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, the information omitted from the form of prospectus filed as part of this registration statement in reliance upon Rule 430A and contained in a form of prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(1) or (4) or 497(h) under the Securities Act shall be deemed to be part of this registration statement as of the time it was declared effective.

(9) That, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each post-effective amendment that contains a form of prospectus shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of Fort Worth, State of Texas, on the 13th day of January, 2011.

HALLMARK
FINANCIAL
SERVICES, INC.

By: /s/ MARK J.
MORRISON
Mark J. Morrison,
President and Chief
Executive
Officer

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POWER OF ATTORNEY

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS, that each person whose signature appears below hereby constitutes and appoints Mark E. Schwarz, Executive Chairman, and Mark J. Morrison, President and Chief Executive Officer, and each of them individually, as his true and lawful attorneys-in-fact and agents, with full power of substitution, for him in his name, place and stead, in any and all capacities, in connection with this registration statement, including to sign and file in the name and on behalf of the undersigned as director or officer of the registrant (i) any and all amendments or supplements (including any and all stickers and post-effective amendments) to this registration statement, with all exhibits thereto, and other documents in connection therewith, and (ii) any and all additional registration statements, and any and all amendments thereto, relating to the same offering of securities as those that are covered by this registration statement that are filed pursuant to Rule 462(b) promulgated under the Securities Act of 1933 with the Securities and Exchange Commission and any applicable securities exchange or securities self-regulatory body, granting unto said attorneys-in-fact and agents, and each of them, full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite or necessary to be done in and about the premises, as fully to all intents and purposes as he might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that said attorneys-in-fact and agents, or their substitute, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this registration statement has been signed by the following persons in the capacities and on the dates indicated:

| Signature | Title | Date |
|--|---|------------------|
| /s/ MARK E. SCHWARZ Mark E. Schwarz | Executive Chairman and Director | January 13, 2011 |
| /s/ MARK J. MORRISON Mark J. Morrison | President and Chief Executive Officer (principal executive officer) | January 13, 2011 |
| /s/ JEFFREY R. PASSMORE Jeffrey R. Passmore | Senior Vice President and Chief Accounting Officer (principal financial and accounting officer) | January 13, 2011 |
| /s/ SCOTT T. BERLIN Scott T. Berlin | Director | January 13, 2011 |
| /s/ JAMES H. GRAVES James H. Graves | Director | January 13, 2011 |
| /s/ JIM W. HENDERSON Jim W. Henderson | Director | January 13, 2011 |
| /s/ GEORGE R. MANSER George R. Manser | Director | January 13, 2011 |