

CATHAY GENERAL BANCORP

Form S-3

August 28, 2009

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As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on August 27, 2009

Registration No. 333-

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

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

CATHAY GENERAL BANCORP

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

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Delaware
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

95-4274680
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

777 North Broadway
Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 625-4700

(Address, Including Zip Code, and Telephone Number, Including Area Code, of Registrant's Principal Executive Offices)

Perry P. Oei, Esq.
Senior Vice President and General Counsel

Cathay General Bancorp
777 North Broadway
Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 625-4700

(Name, Address, Including Zip Code, and Telephone Number, Including Area Code, of Agent For Service)

Copy to:

Gordon M. Bava, Esq.
Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP
11355 W. Olympic Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90064
(310) 312-4000

Approximate Date of Commencement of Proposed Sale to the Public:

From time to time after this Registration Statement becomes effective.

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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, 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 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 definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer

Non-accelerated filer

Accelerated filer

Smaller reporting company

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CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

| Title of Each Class of | Proposed Maximum | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| | Aggregate | Amount of |
| | Offering | Registration |
| Securities to be Registered | Price(1) | Fee(2) |
| Common Stock, par value \$0.01 | | |
| Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 | | |
| Preferred Stock Purchase Rights(3) | | |
| TOTAL | \$100,000,000 | \$5,580 |

- (1) The proposed aggregate offering prices per class of security will be determined from time to time by the registrant in connection with the issuance by the registrant of the securities registered hereunder.

- (2) Calculated pursuant to rule 457(o) of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.

- (3) This Registration Statement also relates to the rights to purchase shares of Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock of the registrant, which are attached to all shares of common stock issued, pursuant to the terms of the registrant's Rights Agreement dated November 16, 2000. Until the occurrence of prescribed events, the rights are not exercisable, are evidenced by certificates for the common stock and will be transferred with and only with such common stock.

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.

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

Subject to Completion, dated August 27, 2009

PROSPECTUS

\$100,000,000

COMMON STOCK

PREFERRED STOCK

We, Cathay General Bancorp, may offer issue and sell from time to time, together or separately, our common stock and our preferred stock, in amounts, at prices, and on other terms to be determined at the time of the offering. We may also issue common stock upon conversion or exchange of any of the securities listed. This prospectus describes the general terms of these securities and the general manner in which we will offer these securities. We will describe the specific terms and manner of offering of these securities in a supplement to this prospectus. The prospectus supplement may also add, update, or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and any prospectus supplement carefully before you invest.

Our common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol **CATY**. Each prospectus supplement will indicate if the preferred stock offered thereby will be listed on any securities exchange.

Investing in our securities involves a high degree of risk. You should consider carefully the risks and uncertainties in the section entitled Risk Factors beginning on page 4 of this prospectus, in any prospectus supplement relating to an offering of those shares, and in the documents we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission before investing in our securities.

These securities are our unsecured obligations and are not savings accounts, deposits, or other obligations of any bank or non-bank subsidiary of ours and are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission, any state securities commission, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve, nor any regulatory agency has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy, completeness, or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is August , 2009.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, using a shelf registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may, from time to time, offer and sell, in one or more offerings:

common stock; and

preferred stock.

We may also issue common stock upon conversion or exchange of any of the securities listed above.

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities we will provide a prospectus supplement containing specific information about the terms of the securities being offered. That prospectus supplement may include a discussion of any risk factors or other special considerations that apply to those securities. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change the information in this prospectus. If there is any inconsistency between the information in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information in that prospectus supplement. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with additional information described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**.

The registration statement containing this prospectus, including exhibits to the registration statement, provides additional information about us and the securities offered under this prospectus. The registration statement can be read at the SEC web site or at the SEC offices mentioned under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**.

You should rely only on the information we incorporate by reference or present in this prospectus or the relevant prospectus supplement. We have not authorized anyone else, including any underwriter or agent, to provide you with different or additional information. We may only use this prospectus to sell securities if it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement which includes the specific terms of that offering. We are only offering these securities in states where the offer is permitted. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus or the applicable prospectus supplement is accurate as of any date other than the dates on the front of those documents.

In this prospectus, Cathay, we, our, ours, and us refer to Cathay General Bancorp, which is a Delaware corporation headquartered in Los Angeles, California, and its subsidiaries on a consolidated basis, unless the context otherwise requires. References to Cathay Bank or the Bank means Cathay Bank, a California state-chartered bank, which is our bank subsidiary.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly, and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public over the Internet at the SEC's web site at www.sec.gov and on the investor relations page of our website at www.cathaygeneralbancorp.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.

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INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference information we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to other documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. In all cases, you should rely on the later information over different information included in this prospectus.

We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and all future filings we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act, prior to the termination of the offering, except to the extent that any information contained in such filings is deemed furnished in accordance with SEC rules:

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2008, filed with the SEC on March 2, 2009, as amended on March 3, 2009, including portions incorporated by reference therein to our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A, filed with the SEC on April 8, 2009;

Our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the fiscal quarter ended March 31, 2009 filed on May 8, 2009, and for the fiscal quarter ended June 30, 2009 filed on August 7, 2009;

The description of our common stock contained in the registration statement on Form 8-A filed on September 16, 1999, including any amendment or report filed to update such description; and

The description of our preferred share purchase rights contained in the registration statement on Form 8-A filed on December 20, 2000, including any amendment or report filed to update such description.

These documents contain important information about us and our financial condition. Information contained in this prospectus supersedes information incorporated by reference that we have filed with the SEC prior to the date of this prospectus, while information that we file with the SEC after the date of this prospectus that is incorporated by reference will automatically update and supersede this information.

Our filings are available on our website, www.cathaygeneralbancorp.com. Information contained in or linked to our website is not a part of this prospectus. You may also request a copy of these filings, at no cost, by writing or telephoning us at:

Cathay General Bancorp

777 North Broadway

Los Angeles, California 90012

(213) 625-4700

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FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and the documents incorporated herein by reference include forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (or the Securities Act) and Section 21E of the Exchange Act. We intend such forward-looking statements to be covered by the safe harbor provisions for forward-looking statements in these provisions. All statements other than statements of historical fact are forward-looking statements for purposes of federal and state securities laws, including statements about anticipated future operating and financial performance, financial position and liquidity, growth opportunities and growth rates, growth plans, acquisition and divestiture opportunities, business prospects, strategic alternatives, business strategies, financial expectations, regulatory and competitive outlook, investment and expenditure plans, financing needs and availability and other similar forecasts and statements of expectation and statements of assumptions underlying any of the foregoing. Words such as aims, anticipates, believes, could, estimates, expects, hopes, intends, projects, seeks, should, will, predicts, potential, continue, and variations of these words and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are subject to certain risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from our historical experience and our present expectations or projections. Such risks and uncertainties and other factors include, but are not limited to adverse developments or conditions related to or arising from:

significant volatility and deterioration in the credit and financial markets; and adverse changes in general economic conditions;

the effects of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) and any changes or amendments thereto;

deterioration in asset or credit quality;

the availability of capital;

the impact of any goodwill impairment that may be determined;

acquisitions of other banks, if any;

fluctuations in interest rates;

the soundness of other financial institutions;

expansion into new market areas;

earthquakes, wildfires, or other natural disasters;

competitive pressures;

changes in laws, regulations, and accounting rules, or their interpretations; any legislative, judicial or regulatory actions and developments against us; and

general economic or business conditions in California and other regions where the Bank has operations, including, but not limited to, adverse changes in economic conditions resulting from a prolonged economic downturn.

Forward-looking statements by us are based on estimates, projections, beliefs and assumptions of management and are not guarantees of future performance. Such forward-looking statements may be contained in this prospectus (and the documents incorporated by reference herein) under Risk Factors, or may be contained in our Annual Report on Form 10-K or in our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q under headings such as Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Conditions and Results of Operations and Business, or in our Current Reports on Form 8-K, among other places. Any investor in Cathay should consider all risks and uncertainties disclosed in our filings with the SEC described above under the heading Where You Can Find More Information, all of which are accessible on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov.

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These and other factors are further described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2008, (at Item 1A in particular) its reports and registration statements filed with the SEC and other filings it makes in the future with the SEC from time to time. Actual results in any future period may also vary from the past results discussed in this report. Given these risks and uncertainties, we caution readers not to place undue reliance on any forward-looking statements, which speak to the date of this report. We have no intention and undertake no obligation to update any forward-looking statement or to publicly announce the results of any revision of any forward-looking statement to reflect future developments or events, except as required by law.

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our securities involves a high degree of risk. Before making an investment decision, you should read carefully and consider the risk factors incorporated by reference in this prospectus, as well as those contained in any applicable prospectus supplement, as the same may be updated from time to time by our future filings with the SEC under the Exchange Act. You should also refer to other information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, including our financial statements and the related notes incorporated by reference herein. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us at this time or that we currently deem immaterial may also materially and adversely affect our business and operations.

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CATHAY GENERAL BANCORP

Cathay General Bancorp is a corporation that was organized in 1990 under the laws of the State of Delaware. We are the holding company of Cathay Bank, a California state-chartered commercial bank.

The Bank's head office is located in the Chinatown area of Los Angeles, at 777 North Broadway, Los Angeles, California 90012. In addition, as of August 27, 2009, the Bank had branch offices in Southern California (20 branches), Northern California (11 branches), New York (eight branches), Massachusetts (one branch), Texas (two branches), Washington (three branches), Illinois (three branch locations and one drive-through), New Jersey (one branch), Hong Kong (one branch) and a representative office in Shanghai and in Taipei. Current activities of the Shanghai and Taipei representative offices are limited to coordinating the transportation of documents to the Bank's head office and performing liaison services.

As a commercial bank, Cathay Bank accepts checking, savings, and time deposits, and makes commercial, real estate, personal, home improvement, automobile, and other installment and term loans. From time to time, the Bank invests available funds in other interest-earning assets, such as U.S. Treasury securities, U.S. government agency securities, state and municipal securities, mortgage-backed securities, asset-backed securities, corporate bonds, and other security investments. The Bank also provides letters of credit, wire transfers, forward currency spot and forward contracts, traveler's checks, safe deposit, night deposit, Social Security payment deposit, collection, bank-by-mail, drive-up and walk-up windows, automatic teller machines, Internet banking services, and other customary bank services.

The Bank primarily services individuals, professionals, and small to medium-sized businesses in the local markets in which its branches are located and provides commercial mortgage loans, commercial loans, Small Business Administration loans, residential mortgage loans, real estate construction loans, equity lines of credit; and installment loans to individuals for automobile, household, and other consumer expenditures.

Through Cathay Wealth Management, Cathay Bank provides its customers the ability to trade stocks online and to purchase mutual funds, annuities, equities, bonds, and short-term money market instruments, through PrimeVest Financial Services. These products are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, or FDIC.

Cathay General Bancorp is regulated as a bank holding company by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, or Federal Reserve Board. Cathay Bank is regulated as a California commercial bank by the California Department of Financial Institutions, or DFI, and the FDIC.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement states otherwise, the net proceeds from the sale of the securities registered hereby will be added to our general funds and will be available for general corporate purposes, including, among other things, the repayment of existing indebtedness, investments in, or extensions of credit to, our existing or future subsidiaries, and the financing of possible acquisitions.

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 bank.

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The following table shows our ratio of earnings to fixed charges and preferred dividends on a consolidated basis.

For purposes of determining the ratio of earnings to fixed charges and preferred dividends, earnings are defined as the sum of pre-tax income (loss) from continuing operations, fixed charges and amortization of capitalized interest; less interest capitalized, preference security dividend requirements of consolidated subsidiaries and minority interest in pre-tax income of subsidiaries that have not incurred fixed charges. Fixed charges means the sum of interest expensed and capitalized, amortized premiums, discounts and capitalized expenses related to indebtedness and an estimate of the interest within rental expense and preference security dividend requirements of consolidated subsidiaries.

CATHAY GENERAL BANCORP AND SUBSIDIARIES**Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends**

| (Dollars in thousands) | For the six months ended June 30, | | | For the Years Ended December 31, | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------|------------|----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2009 | 2008 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 |
| Income/(Loss) before income tax expense | \$ (35,313) | \$ 69,293 | \$ 70,075 | \$ 196,660 | \$ 184,829 | \$ 166,481 | \$ 140,422 |
| Plus fixed charges | 132,145 | 152,941 | 299,477 | 309,114 | 214,664 | 112,432 | 62,142 |
| Earnings | 96,832 | 222,234 | 369,552 | 505,774 | 399,493 | 278,913 | 202,564 |
| Fixed charges | 132,145 | 152,941 | 299,477 | 309,114 | 214,664 | 112,432 | 62,142 |
| Preferred Dividends | 8,464 | 301 | 1,750 | 610 | 610 | 611 | 593 |
| Fixed Charges and Preferred Dividends | \$ 140,609 | \$ 153,242 | \$ 301,227 | \$ 309,724 | \$ 215,274 | \$ 113,043 | \$ 62,735 |
| Ratio of earnings to fixed charges | 0.73 | 1.45 | 1.23 | 1.64 | 1.86 | 2.48 | 3.26 |
| Ratio of earnings to fixed charges and preferred dividends | 0.69 | 1.45 | 1.23 | 1.63 | 1.86 | 2.47 | 3.23 |

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DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

The following is a brief description of the terms of our common stock. This summary does not purport to be complete in all respects. This description is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to our restated certificate of incorporation, as amended, and our restated bylaws, as amended, copies of which have been filed with the SEC and are also available upon request from us, as well as the description of our common stock which is incorporated by reference herein through our previous filings with the SEC, including the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed on September 16, 1999, and any amendment or report filed to update such description.

General

Our restated certificate of incorporation, as amended, provides the authority to issue 100,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$.01 per share. At August 21, 2009, there were 49,581,295 shares of common stock outstanding. Each share of our common stock has the same relative rights and is identical in all respects to each other share of our common stock.

Voting Rights

Holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote for each share that they hold and are vested with all of the voting power except as our board of directors has provided, or may provide in the future, with respect to preferred stock or any other class or series of preferred stock that the board of directors may hereafter authorize.

Except in very limited circumstances, holders of our common stock may not cumulate their votes in the election of directors, which means that a majority of the outstanding shares of common stock are generally able to elect all of the directors standing for election each year, subject to the rights of any preferred stock that is then issued and outstanding.

Dividends

Holders of our common stock are entitled to receive dividends if, as and when declared by our board of directors, out of any funds legally available for dividends subject to certain restrictions on payment of dividends imposed by the Delaware General Corporation Law and state and federal banking laws. We pay dividends on our common stock only if we have paid or provided for all dividends on our outstanding series of preferred stock, for the then current period and, in the case of any cumulative preferred stock, all prior periods. Our Series B Fixed Rate Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock and Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock and any other series of preferred stock upon issuance, will have preference over our common stock with respect to the payment of dividends.

Dividends on the common stock are further limited to the extent we are not current in making payments on our outstanding subordinated debt securities. We established three special purpose trusts in 2003 and two in 2007 for the purpose of issuing Guaranteed Preferred Beneficial Interests in their Subordinated Debentures to outside investors (Capital Securities). The proceeds from the issuance of the Capital Securities as well as our purchase of the common stock of the special purpose trusts were invested in Junior Subordinated Notes of the Company (Junior Subordinated Notes). We have the right to defer payments of interest on the Junior Subordinated Notes at any time or from time to time for a period of up to twenty consecutive quarterly periods with respect to each deferral period. Under the terms of the Junior Subordinated Notes, we may not, with certain exceptions, declare or pay any dividends or distributions on our common stock (or preferred stock) if we have deferred payment of interest on any Junior Subordinated Notes or if we are in default under the terms of the Junior Subordinated Notes. At December 31, 2008, the Junior Subordinated Notes totaled \$121.1 million.

As a holding company, our ability to pay distributions is affected by the ability of our subsidiaries to pay dividends. The ability of our bank subsidiary, and our ability, to pay dividends in the future is, and could in the future be further, limited by bank regulatory requirements and capital guidelines.

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Liquidation Rights

The holders of our common stock will become entitled to participate ratably in the distribution of any of our assets remaining after we have paid all of our debts and liabilities and after we have paid to the holders of any class of stock having preference over the common stock in the event of liquidation, dissolution or winding-up, the full preferential amounts, if any, to which they are entitled. Our Series B Fixed Rate Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock and Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock and any other series of preferred stock upon issuance, will have preference over our common stock with respect to the distribution of assets in the event of our liquidation or dissolution.

Certain Provisions of California and Federal Law

The following discussion is a summary of certain provisions of California and federal law and regulations, relating to stock ownership and transfers and business combinations, all of which may be deemed to have antitakeover effects. The description of these provisions is necessarily general and reference should be made to the actual laws and regulations and to the Certificate of Incorporation and bylaws of the Company.

Federal law prohibits a person or group of persons acting in concert from acquiring control of a bank holding company unless the Federal Reserve Board has been given 60 days prior written notice of such proposed acquisition and, within that time period, the Federal Reserve Board has not issued a notice disapproving the proposed acquisition or extending for up to another 30 days the period during which such a disapproval may be issued. An acquisition may be made prior to the expiration of the disapproval period if the Federal Reserve Board issues written notice of its intent not to disapprove the action. Under a rebuttable presumption established by the Federal Reserve Board, the acquisition of more than 10% of a class of voting stock of a bank or bank holding company with a class of securities registered under Section 12 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, would, under the circumstances set forth in the presumption, constitute the acquisition of control. In addition, any company would be required to obtain the approval of the Federal Reserve Board under the Bank Holding Company Act before acquiring 25% (5% in the case of an acquiror that is, or is deemed to be, a bank holding company) or more of any class of voting stock, or such lesser number of shares as may constitute control.

Under the California Financial Code, no person shall, directly or indirectly, acquire control of a California state bank or its holding company unless the DFI has approved such acquisition of control. A person would be deemed to have acquired control of the Company, and thereby indirectly control of the Bank, if such person, directly or indirectly, has the power (i) to vote 25% or more of the voting power of the Company or (ii) to direct or cause the direction of the management and policies of the Company. For purposes of this law, a person who directly or indirectly owns or controls 10% or more of the common stock would be presumed to control the Company.

Miscellaneous

Shares of our common stock are not redeemable, and have no subscription, conversion or preemptive rights. Outstanding shares of our common stock are validly issued, fully paid and non-assessable. Holders of our common stock are not, and will not be, subject to any liability as shareholders.

NASDAQ Listing

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol CATY.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is American Stock Transfer & Trust Company.

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DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK

The following briefly summarizes some of the provisions in our restated certificate of incorporation, restated bylaws and Delaware law regarding our preferred stock that we may offer from time to time. The specific terms of a series of preferred stock that we may offer will be described in a prospectus supplement relating to that series of preferred stock. The following description, and any description of our preferred stock in a prospectus supplement, may not be complete and is qualified in all respects by reference to the provisions of our restated certificate of incorporation, our restated bylaws, Delaware law and the certificate of designations relating to the particular series of our preferred stock as well as the description of our preferred stock which is incorporated by reference herein through our previous filings with the SEC, including the description of our preferred share purchase rights contained in the registration statement on Form 8-A filed on December 20, 2000, and any amendment or report filed to update such description. We will file such certificate of designations with the SEC at or prior to the time of sale of that series of preferred stock. You are encouraged to read the more detailed provisions of these documents and laws for provisions that may be important to you. You can obtain copies of our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws by following the directions under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information** .

General

Under our restated certificate of incorporation, as amended, we have authority to issue up to 10,000,000 shares of preferred stock, \$.01 par value per share. Of such number of shares of preferred stock, 100,000 shares have been designated as Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock (**Series A Junior Preferred Stock**), and 258,000 shares have been designated as Series B Fixed Rate Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock (**Series B Preferred Stock**) or further-described below.

Authorization and Issuance

Our Board of Directors, without stockholder approval, can authorize preferred stock to be issued with voting, conversion and other rights that could adversely affect the voting power and other rights of our common stockholders or other outstanding series of preferred stock. Pursuant to our restated bylaws, our Board of Directors may grant authority to a special committee to authorize and determine the terms of any series of preferred stock issued.

Each series of preferred stock will have the dividend, liquidation, redemption and voting rights described below, unless otherwise described in a prospectus supplement pertaining to a specific series of preferred stock. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the following terms of the series of preferred stock in respect of which this prospectus is being delivered:

the designation of that series, the number of shares offered and the stated value thereof if different from the par value thereof;

the amount of the liquidation preference, if any, per share or the method of calculating that amount;

the subscription or purchase price and form of consideration for which the shares of such series shall be issued;

the dividend rate, if any, or the method of calculating that rate, the dates on which dividends will be paid and the dates from which dividends will begin to cumulate, if applicable;

any redemption provisions;

any conversion or exchange rights and provisions;

any additional voting and other rights, preferences, privileges, qualifications, limitations and restrictions;

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any securities exchange listing;

the relative ranking and preferences of that series as to dividend rights and rights upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up; and

any other terms of that series.

Shares of our preferred stock, when issued against full payment of their purchase price, will be validly issued, fully paid and non-assessable.

Voting Rights

The voting rights of preferred stock of any series will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Under regulations of the Federal Reserve Board, if the holders of any series of preferred stock become entitled to vote for the election of directors because dividends on that series are in arrears, that series may then be deemed a class of voting securities, and a holder of 25% of more of that series (or a holder of 5% or more if it otherwise exercises a controlling influence over us) may then be subject to regulation as a bank holding company. In addition, in that event:

any bank holding company may be required to obtain Federal Reserve Board approval, and any foreign bank, and any company that controls a foreign bank, that has certain types of U.S. banking operations may be required to obtain Federal Reserve Board approval under the International Banking Act of 1978, to acquire 5% or more of that series of preferred stock; and

any person other than a bank holding company may be required to obtain Federal Reserve Board approval under the Change in Bank Control Act of 1978 to acquire 10% or more of that series of preferred stock.

Dividends

Holders of each series of preferred stock will be entitled to receive, when, as, and if our board declares, cash dividends payable at the dates and at the rates per share as described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Those rates may be fixed, variable or both. Dividends may be cumulative or noncumulative and may be payable in preference to, or in such relation to, the dividends payable on any other class or classes or series of our stock, as described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Liquidation Rights

In the event of our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution, or winding up, preferred stockholders of any particular series will be entitled, subject to creditors' rights and holders of any series of preferred stock ranking senior as to liquidation rights, but before any distribution to common stockholders or holders of any series of preferred stock ranking junior as to liquidation rights, to receive a liquidating distribution in the amount of the liquidation preference, if any, per share as mentioned in the applicable prospectus supplement, plus accrued and unpaid dividends for the current dividend period. This would include any accumulation of unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods, if dividends on that series of preferred stock are cumulative. If the amounts available for distribution upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up are not sufficient to satisfy the full liquidation rights of all the outstanding preferred stock of that series and all stock ranking equal to that series of preferred stock, then the holders of each series of that stock will share ratably in any distribution of assets in proportion to the full respective preferential amount, which may include accumulated dividends, to which they are entitled. After the full amount of the liquidation preference is paid, the holders of preferred stock will not be entitled to any further participation in any distribution of our assets.

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Conversion and Exchange

The terms on which preferred stock of any series may be converted into or exchanged for another class or series of securities will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Redemption

The terms on which any series of preferred stock may be redeemed will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. All shares of preferred stock which we redeem, purchase or acquire, including shares surrendered for conversion or exchange, shall be retired and restored to the status of authorized but unissued shares of preferred stock undesignated as to series.

Other Rights

The shares of a series of preferred stock may have the preferences, conversion, or other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to dividends, qualifications, terms or conditions of redemption, or other rights as may be described in the applicable prospectus supplement, our restated certificate of incorporation, or as otherwise required by law.

Title

We, the transfer agent and the registrar for a series of preferred stock, and any of our or their agents may treat the registered owner of that preferred stock as the absolute owner of that stock, whether or not any payment for that preferred stock shall be overdue and despite any notice to the contrary, for any purposes.

Series A Junior Preferred Stock

General

The 100,000 shares of the Series A Junior Preferred Stock are subject to purchase under outstanding preferred share purchase rights that expire in November 2010. The preferred share purchase rights were distributed to our common shareholders as a dividend on the basis of one right for each share of common stock. The rights are transferable only with the underlying shares of common stock to which they relate. In general, the rights become exercisable if, after December 20, 2000, a person or group acquires 15% or more of our common stock or announces a tender offer for 15% or more of our common stock. The Board of Directors is entitled to redeem the rights at one cent per right at any time before any such person acquires 15% or more of the outstanding common stock.

Ranking

Series A Junior Preferred Stock ranks senior to common stock but junior to all other series of Preferred Stock as to payment of dividends and the distribution of assets upon liquidation, unless the terms of such series provide otherwise.

Voting Rights

Holders of shares of Series A Junior Preferred Stock are entitled to the number of votes set forth in the Certificate of Designation of Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock on all matters submitted to a vote of the stockholders of the Corporation.

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If, at the time of any annual meeting of stockholders for the election of directors, the equivalent of six quarterly dividends (whether or not consecutive) payable on any shares of Series A Junior Preferred Stock are in default, the number of directors constituting our Board of Directors will be increased by two. In addition to voting with holders of common stock for the election of other directors, the holders of record of Series A Junior Preferred Stock, voting separately as a class to the exclusion of holders of common stock, will be entitled to vote for the election of two directors. If and when such default ceases to exist, the holders of Series A Junior Preferred Stock will be divested of the foregoing special voting rights and the number of directors constituting our Board of Directors will be reduced by two.

Dividends

Holders of our Series A Junior Preferred Stock are entitled to receive dividends if, as and when declared by our board of directors, out of any funds legally available for dividends in the amount specified in the Certificate of Designation for the Series A Junior Preferred Stock. We must declare such dividend immediately after a dividend or distribution on our common stock is declared. Dividends on the Series A Junior Preferred Stock are further limited to the extent we are not current in making payments on or we are deferring interest on our outstanding Junior Subordinated Notes.

Whenever dividends on Series A Junior Preferred Stock are in arrears, we will not (i) declare or pay dividends on, or make any distribution on, or redeem or purchase or otherwise acquire for consideration any shares of stock ranking junior to the Series A Junior Preferred Stock, (ii) declare or pay dividends on or make any other distributions on any shares of stock ranking on parity with the Series A Junior Preferred Stock, except dividends paid ratably on the Series A Junior Preferred Stock, or (iii) purchase or otherwise acquire for consideration Series A Junior Preferred Stock or any shares of stock ranking on parity, except in accordance with a purchase offer made to all holders of Series A Junior Preferred Stock, or to such holders and holders of any such shares ranking on a parity therewith, on terms that our board of directors have determined in good faith will result in fair and equitable treatment of the respective series of classes.

Liquidation Rights

Holders of our Series A Junior Preferred Stock will have preference over holders of stock ranking junior to Series A Junior Preferred Stock (either as to dividends or upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up) with respect to the distribution of assets in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

Redemption

Shares of our Series A Junior Preferred Stock are not redeemable.

Fixed Rate Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series B

General

On December 5, 2008, the U.S. Treasury purchased 258,000 shares of our Series B Preferred Stock, in the amount of \$258.0 million, pursuant to the U.S. Treasury Troubled Asset Relief Program Capital Purchase Program under the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008. The Series B Preferred Stock pays cumulative compounding dividends at a rate of 5% per year for the first five years, and thereafter at a rate of 9% per year. In conjunction with the purchase of senior preferred shares, the U.S. Treasury received warrants to purchase common stock of 1,846,374 shares at the exercise price of \$20.96 with an aggregate market price equal to \$38.7 million, 15% of the senior preferred stock amount that the U.S. Treasury invested. The exercise price of \$20.96 on warrants was calculated based on the average of closing prices of our common stock on the 20 trading days ending on the last trading day prior to November 17, 2008, the date that we received the preliminary approval of capital purchase from the U.S. Treasury.

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Voting Rights

If, at the time of any annual meeting of stockholders for the election of directors, the equivalent of six quarterly dividends (whether or not consecutive) payable on any shares of Series B Preferred Stock are in default, the number of directors constituting our Board of Directors will be increased by two. In addition to voting with holders of common stock for the election of other directors, the holders of record of Series B Preferred Stock, voting separately as a class to the exclusion of holders of common stock, will be entitled to vote for the election of two directors. If and when such default ceases to exist, the holders of Series B Preferred Stock will be divested of the foregoing special voting rights and the number of directors constituting our Board of Directors will be reduced by two.

In addition to any other vote or consent of stockholders required by law or by our certificate of incorporation, the vote or consent of holders of at least 66 ²/₃% of the shares of Series B Preferred Stock at the time outstanding, voting as a separate class, is necessary for effecting and validating the (i) authorization of senior stock, (ii) amendment of the Certificate of Designation for the Series B Preferred Stock and (iii) subject to exceptions, share exchanges, reclassifications, mergers and consolidations.

Dividends

Holders of our Series B Preferred Stock are entitled to receive dividends if, as and when declared by our board of directors, out of any funds legally available for dividends in the amount specified in the Certificate of Designations for the Series B Preferred Stock. Such dividends will accrue and be cumulative from the original issue date, and will compound on each subsequent dividend payment date. Dividends on the Series B Preferred Stock are further limited to the extent we are not current in making payments on or we are deferring interest on our outstanding Junior Subordinated Notes.

Subject to certain exceptions, whenever dividends on Series B Preferred Stock are in arrears, we will not (i) declare or pay dividends on, or make any distribution on, or redeem or purchase or otherwise acquire for consideration any shares of stock ranking junior to the Series B Preferred Stock or (ii) declare or pay dividends on or make any other distributions on any shares of stock ranking on parity with the Series B Preferred Stock, subject to certain limitations set forth in our Certificate of Designations for the Series B Preferred Stock.

Dividends on common stock and other junior stock can only be declared and paid subject to the foregoing. Holders of Series B Preferred Stock are not entitled to participate in any such dividends.

Liquidation Rights

Holders of our Series B Preferred Stock will have preference over holders of common stock and any other stock ranking junior to the Series B Preferred Stock with respect to the distribution of assets in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

Redemption

The shares of Series B Preferred Stock may be redeemed prior to the first dividend payment date falling on or after the third anniversary of the original issue date, at our option and subject to approval from the Federal Reserve Board, upon notice and on the terms set forth in our Certificate of Designations for the Series B Preferred Stock. Holders of Series B Preferred Stock have no right to exchange or convert such shares into any other securities.

Miscellaneous

Holders of Series B Preferred Stock have no preemptive rights.

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ANTI-TAKEOVER PROVISIONS IN CATHAY S CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION AND BYLAWS

The following includes a brief description of certain of the provisions of Cathay s restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws. This description is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to our restated certificate of incorporation, as amended, and restated bylaws, as amended, copies of which have been filed with the SEC and are also available upon request from us.

General

Our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws contain certain provisions that deal with matters of corporate governance and certain rights of stockholders which might be deemed to have a potential anti-takeover effect. These provisions may have the effect of discouraging a future takeover attempt which is not approved by the board of directors but which individual stockholders may deem to be in their best interest, or in which stockholders may receive a substantial premium for their shares over then current market prices. As a result, stockholders who might desire to participate in such a transaction may not have an opportunity to do so. Such provisions will also render the removal of an incumbent board of directors or management more difficult.

Preferred Stock Purchase Rights

On November 16, 2000, our board of directors adopted a Rights Agreement between us and American Stock Transfer and Trust Company, as Rights Agent, and declared a dividend of one preferred share purchase right for each outstanding share of our common stock. Each preferred share purchase right entitles the registered holder to purchase from Cathay one one-thousandth of a share of Cathay Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock at a price of \$200, subject to adjustment. In general, the rights become exercisable if a person or group acquires 15% or more of our common stock or announces a tender offer for 15% or more of the common stock. Our board of directors is entitled to redeem the rights at one cent per right at any time before any such person acquires 15% or more of the outstanding common stock. The rights will expire on November 16, 2010.

In addition, our restated certificate of incorporation has other provisions that could make more difficult the acquisition of Cathay by means of a tender offer, a proxy contest, merger or otherwise. These provisions include: (i) a requirement that any Business Combination (as defined in the restated certificate of incorporation) be approved by the affirmative vote of not less than 80% of the voting power of the then outstanding shares, voting together as a single class, excluding voting stock beneficially owned by an interested stockholder unless certain conditions are met, including without limitation: (a) the Business Combination is approved by a majority of Continuing Directors (as defined in the restated certificate of incorporation) or certain minimum price requirements are satisfied, (b) consideration to be received by holders of a particular series of stock is in cash or in the same form as has been previously paid by an Interested Stockholder (as defined in the restated certificate of incorporation) in connection with its acquisition of beneficial ownership of shares of such class, (c) there has been no failure to declare and pay at the regular date thereof any full regular dividends payable in accordance with the terms of any outstanding capital stock, other than common stock, except as approved by a majority of the Continuing Directors, (d) there has been no reduction in the amount, or change in the frequency of payment, of any dividends regularly paid on the common stock, (e) the Interested Stockholder has not received the benefit, directly or indirectly, of any loans, advances, guarantees, pledges or other financial assistance or tax credits or tax advantages by the Corporation, and (f) a proxy or information statement describing the Business Combination has been mailed to all stockholders of the Corporation at least 30 days prior to consummation of such Business Combination, (ii) a requirement that any Stock Repurchase (as defined in the restated certificate of incorporation) from an Interested Stockholder shall be approved by the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes entitled to be cast by the holders of such stock which is beneficially owned by persons other than such Interested Stockholder, voting together as a single class, unless (a) the Stock Repurchase is made pursuant to a tender offer or exchange offer made available on the same basis to all holders of such class of capital stock, or (b) the Stock

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Repurchase is made pursuant to an open market program approved by a majority of the Continuing Directors, and (iii) the ability of the board of directors to issue preferred stock at such time and on such terms and conditions as it deems appropriate.

Directors

Certain provisions of our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws will impede changes in majority control of the board of directors. Our restated certificate of incorporation and/or restated bylaws provide that: our board is divided into three classes so that approximately one-third of the total number of directors is elected each year (this classified board of directors is intended to provide for continuity of the board of directors and to make it more difficult and time consuming for a stockholder group to use its voting power to gain control of the board of directors without consent of the incumbent board of directors); any vacancy occurring in the board of directors, including a vacancy created by an increase in the number of directors, is generally filled by a majority vote of the directors then in office for the remainder of the unexpired term; a director, in general, may be removed from office at any time only for cause and only by the affirmative vote of eighty (80%) percent of the then-outstanding shares of capital stock entitled to vote generally in the election of directors, voting together as a single class; stockholders may vote their shares cumulatively for directors in the event there is a holder of forty (40%) or more of our outstanding capital stock entitled to vote; prohibition on taking action by shareholder written consent or for shareholders to call for a special meeting; and procedures for the nomination of directors and submission of matters to the vote of our stockholders.

Delaware Anti-Takeover Statute

We are subject to Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, which prohibits a publicly held Delaware corporation from engaging in a business combination with an interested stockholder for a period of three years after the date of the transaction in which the person becomes an interested stockholder, unless:

before that date, the board of directors of the corporation approves either the business combination or the transaction that resulted in the stockholder's becoming an interested stockholder;

upon consummation of the transaction that resulted in the stockholder's becoming an interested stockholder, the interested stockholder owns at least 85% of the outstanding voting stock, excluding shares held by directors, officers and employee stock plans; or

on or after the consummation date, the business combination is approved by the board of directors and by the affirmative vote at an annual or special meeting of stockholders of at least 66-2/3% of the outstanding voting stock that is not owned by the interested stockholder.

For purposes of Section 203, a business combination includes a merger, asset sale or other transaction resulting in a financial benefit to the interested stockholder. An interested stockholder is generally a person who, together with affiliates and associates of that person, (a) owns 15% or more of the corporation's voting stock or (b) is an affiliate or associate of the corporation and was the owner of 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation at any time within the three year period immediately prior to the date on which it is to be determined whether such person is an interested stockholder.

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PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell these securities offered under this prospectus in public offerings through one or more underwriters or dealers, through other agents, or directly to one or more purchasers or a combination thereof. Underwriters and agents in any distribution contemplated hereby will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms of any distribution, including, but not limited to, at the market equity offerings as defined in Rule 415 of the Securities Act, will also be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Underwriters or agents could make sales in privately negotiated transactions and/or any method permitted by law, including sales deemed to be an at the market equity offerings, which includes sales made directly on or through the facilities of the NASDAQ Global Select Market (the existing trading market for our common stock), or any other securities exchange or quotation or trading service on which such securities may be listed, quoted or traded at the time of sale, or sales made to or through a market maker other than on an exchange.

Underwriters, dealers and agents that participate in the distribution of these securities may be underwriters as defined in the Securities Act and any discounts or commissions received by them from us and any profit on the resale of these securities by them may be treated as underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act. Any underwriting compensation paid by us to underwriters or agents in connection with the offering of securities, and any discounts, concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers, will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. The prospectus supplement will also describe other terms of the offering, including the initial public offering price, any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers and any securities exchanges on which these securities may be listed.

The distribution of these securities may occur from time to time in one or more transactions at a fixed price or prices, at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to the prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices.

This prospectus, together with any applicable prospectus supplement, may also be used by our affiliates in connection with offers and sales of the securities in market-making transactions at negotiated prices related to prevailing market prices at the time of sale. Such affiliates may act as principals or agents in such transactions. None of our affiliates have any obligation to make a market in the securities and each may discontinue any market-making activities at any time, without notice, at its sole discretion.

We may have agreements with the underwriters, dealers and agents, including our affiliates, to indemnify them against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute with respect to payments which the underwriters, dealers, or agents may be required to make as a result of those certain civil liabilities.

Any securities issued hereunder (except the common stock) will be new issuances of securities with no established trading market. If we sell a security offered by this prospectus to an underwriter for public offering and sale, the underwriter may make a market for that security, but the underwriter will not be obligated to do so and could discontinue any market making without notice at any time. Therefore, we cannot give any assurances to you concerning the liquidity of any security offered by this prospectus.

Underwriters and agents and their affiliates may be customers of, engage in transactions with, or perform services for us or our subsidiaries in the ordinary course of their businesses. In connection with the distribution of the securities offered under this prospectus, we may enter into swap or other hedging transactions with, or arranged by, underwriters or agents or their affiliates. These underwriters or agents or their affiliates may receive compensation, trading gain, or other benefits from these transactions.

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LEGAL MATTERS

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, certain legal matters will be passed upon for us by Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP, Los Angeles, California and Perry P. Oei, Esquire, our General Counsel. Mr. Oei holds options to purchase our common stock. Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, certain legal matters will be passed upon for any underwriters or agents by their own counsel.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Cathay General Bancorp and subsidiaries as of December 31, 2008 and 2007, and for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2008, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2008, have been incorporated by reference herein and in the registration statement in reliance upon the reports 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.

Table of Contents**PART II****INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS****Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution.**

The following table sets forth the various expenses to be incurred in connection with the issuance and distribution of the securities being registered. All amounts shown are estimates except the SEC registration fee.

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| SEC registration fee | \$ 5,580 |
| Legal fees and expenses | \$ 225,000 |
| Accounting fees and expenses | \$ 75,000 |
| Printing fees and expenses | \$ 20,000 |
| Miscellaneous expenses | \$ 50,000 |
| Total Expenses | \$ 375,580 |

Item 15. Indemnification of Directors and Officers.

Pursuant to Section 102(b)(7) of the Delaware General Corporation Law (the "DGCL"), our restated certificate of incorporation contains a provision that eliminates the personal liability of its directors to the registrant and its stockholders for monetary damages resulting from breaches of their fiduciary duty as directors, other than liability for breaches of the duty of loyalty, acts, or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law, violations under Section 174 of the DGCL or any transaction from which the director derived an improper personal benefit.

Section 145 of the DGCL permits, and under certain circumstances requires, registrant to indemnify its directors, officers, employees, and agents subject to certain conditions and limitations. We have entered into indemnification agreements with each of our directors and officers. Our restated bylaws also contain provisions to indemnify its agents, including its directors and officers. In addition, the registrant maintains directors and officers liability insurance which insures against certain liabilities that its officers and directors may incur in such capacities and has entered into indemnity agreements with such officers and directors.

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Item 16. Exhibits

| EXHIBIT NUMBER | DESCRIPTION |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1.1 | Form of Underwriting Agreement or Distribution Agreement * |
| 3.1 | Restated Certificate of Incorporation (1) |
| 3.2 | Certificate of Amendment of Restated Certificate of Incorporation (2) |
| 3.3 | Restated Bylaws (3) |
| 3.4 | Amendment to the Restated Bylaws (4) |
| 3.5 | Amendment to the Restated Bylaws (5) |
| 3.6 | Certificate of Designation of Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock (6) |
| 3.7 | Certificate of Designations of Series B Preferred Stock (7) |
| 3.8 | Certificate of Designation of Preferred Stock * |
| 4.1 | Rights Agreement with American Stock Transfer and Trust Company, dated November 16, 2000 (8) |
| 4.4 | Form of Preferred Stock Certificate * |
| 5.1 | Opinion of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP ** |
| 12.1 | Statement of ratio of earnings to fixed charges and preferred dividends ** |
| 23.1 | Consent of KPMG LLP ** |
| 23.2 | Consent of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP (included in Exhibit 5.1 filed herewith) |
| 24.1 | Powers of Attorney (included in the signature pages to the Registration Statement) |

* To be filed by amendment or as an exhibit to a document incorporated by reference herein.

** Filed herewith.

- (1) Filed as Exhibit 3.1 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003 and incorporated herein by reference.
- (2) Filed as Exhibit 3.1.1 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003 and incorporated herein by reference.
- (3) Filed as Exhibit 3.2 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003 and incorporated herein by reference.
- (4) Filed as Exhibit 3.2.1 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003 and incorporated herein by reference.
- (5)

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Previously filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 18, 2007, as an exhibit to the Registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K and incorporated herein by reference.

- (6) Filed as Exhibit 3.3 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2006 and incorporated herein by reference.
- (7) Filed as Exhibit 3.1 and 4.1 to the Registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed on December 5, 2008 and incorporated hereby by reference.
- (8) Filed as Exhibit 1 to the Registrant's Form 8-A filed on December 20, 2000 and incorporated hereby by reference.

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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, as amended (the Securities Act of 1933);

(ii) to reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of this 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 this registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in the 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 percent 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 this registration statement or any material change to such information in this 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 periodic 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, as amended (the Exchange Act), that are incorporated by reference in this registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of this registration statement.

(2) That, for the purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each 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 the 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 a 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.

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(5) That, for the purpose of determining liability of a 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:

(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.

The registrant hereby undertakes 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 Exchange Act (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Exchange Act) 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.

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 indemnification provisions described herein, 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 Securities Act of 1933 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 Securities Act of 1933 and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

Table of Contents**SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, 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 Los Angeles, State of California, on August 27, 2009.

CATHAY GENERAL BANCORP

By: /s/ DUNSON K. CHENG
Dunson K. Cheng

Chairman, President, and

Chief Executive Officer

Power of Attorney and Signatures

Each person whose signature appears below appoints Dunson K. Cheng and Heng W. Chen, and each of them acting individually, as his or her true and lawful attorneys-in-fact and agents, with full power of substitution and resubstitution, for him or her and in his or her name, place and stead, in any and all capacities, to sign any and all amendments (including post-effective amendments) to this Registration Statement and any registration statement (including any amendment thereto) of the Registrant to be filed after the date hereof pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and to file the same, with all exhibits thereto, and all other documents in connection therewith, with the Securities and Exchange Commission, granting unto said attorneys-in-fact and agents full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite and necessary to be done, as fully to all intents and purposes as he or she might or would do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that said attorneys-in fact and agents or any of them or their or his or her substitute and substitutes, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, this Registration Statement has been signed by the following persons in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

| Signature | Title | Date |
|---|---|-----------------|
| /s/ DUNSON K. CHENG Dunson K. Cheng | President, Chief Executive Officer, and Chairman of the Board (Principal Executive Officer) | August 27, 2009 |
| /s/ HENG W. CHEN Heng W. Chen | Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, and Treasurer (Principal Financial and Accounting Officer) | August 27, 2009 |
| /s/ PETER WU Peter Wu | Director | August 27, 2009 |
| /s/ ANTHONY M. TANG Anthony M. Tang | Director | August 27, 2009 |
| /s/ KELLY L. CHAN Kelly L. Chan | Director | August 27, 2009 |
| /s/ MICHAEL M.Y. CHANG Michael M.Y. Chang | Director | August 27, 2009 |

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Michael M.Y. Chang

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| Signature | Title | Date |
|---|--------------|-----------------|
| /s/ THOMAS C.T. CHIU Thomas C.T. Chiu | Director | August 27, 2009 |
| /s/ NELSON CHUNG Nelson Chung | Director | August 27, 2009 |
| /s/ PATRICK S.D. LEE Patrick S.D. Lee | Director | August 27, 2009 |
| /s/ TING LIU Ting Liu | Director | August 27, 2009 |
| /s/ JOSEPH C.H. POON Joseph C.H. Poon | Director | August 27, 2009 |
| /s/ THOMAS G. TARTAGLIA Thomas G. Tartaglia | Director | August 27, 2009 |

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EXHIBIT INDEX

| EXHIBIT NUMBER | DESCRIPTION |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1.1 | Form of Underwriting Agreement or Distribution Agreement * |
| 3.1 | Restated Certificate of Incorporation (1) |
| 3.2 | Certificate of Amendment of Restated Certificate of Incorporation (2) |
| 3.3 | Restated Bylaws (3) |
| 3.4 | Amendment to the Restated Bylaws (4) |
| 3.5 | Amendment to the Restated Bylaws (5) |
| 3.6 | Certificate of Designation of Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock (6) |
| 3.7 | Certificate of Designations of Series B Preferred Stock (7) |
| 3.8 | Certificate of Designation of Preferred Stock * |
| 4.3 | Rights Agreement with American Stock Transfer and Trust Company, dated November 16, 2000(8) |
| 4.4 | Form of Preferred Stock Certificate * |
| 5.1 | Opinion of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP ** |
| 12.1 | Statement of ratio of earnings to fixed charges and preferred dividends ** |
| 23.1 | Consent of KPMG LLP ** |
| 23.2 | Consent of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP (included in Exhibit 5.1 filed herewith) |
| 24.1 | Powers of Attorney (included in the signature pages to the Registration Statement) |

* To be filed by amendment or as an exhibit to a document incorporated by reference herein.

** Filed herewith.

- (1) Filed as Exhibit 3.1 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003 and incorporated herein by reference.
- (2) Filed as Exhibit 3.1.1 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003 and incorporated herein by reference.
- (3) Filed as Exhibit 3.2 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003 and incorporated herein by reference.
- (4) Filed as Exhibit 3.2.1 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003 and incorporated herein by reference.

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- (5) Previously filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 18, 2007, as an exhibit to the Registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K and incorporated herein by reference.
- (6) Filed as Exhibit 3.3 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2006 and incorporated herein by reference.
- (7) Filed as Exhibit 3.1 and 4.1 to the Registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed on December 5, 2008 and incorporated hereby by reference.
- (8) Filed as Exhibit 1 to the Registrant's Form 8-A filed on December 20, 2000 and incorporated hereby by reference.