

IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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National Media contact: Mark Saunders  
(O) 202-268-6524  
(C) 202-320-0782  
[mark.r.saunders@usps.gov](mailto:mark.r.saunders@usps.gov)

San Diego Media contact: Eva Jackson  
[eva.m.jackson@usps.gov](mailto:eva.m.jackson@usps.gov)  
(O) 858-674-0107  
(C) 858-437-1493  
[usps.com/news](http://usps.com/news)  
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## **Postal Service Salutes ‘G.I. Bob’ With First-Class Stamp** *Bob Hope Stamp Issued on What Would Have Been Entertainer’s 106<sup>th</sup> Birthday*

A high-resolution image of the stamp is available for media use only by emailing [mark.r.saunders@usps.gov](mailto:mark.r.saunders@usps.gov)  
B-roll of Hope entertaining service members is available at [www.usps.com/news](http://www.usps.com/news) through the Pathfire icon.

SAN DIEGO, CA — One of the nation’s most revered entertainers and humanitarians was immortalized by the Postal Service today when it dedicated the 44-cent Bob Hope First-Class commemorative stamp on the flight deck of the USS Midway, where “G.I. Bob” twice entertained service men and women during his nearly six-decade commitment to boosting military morale. Hope’s daughter, Linda, and his son Kelly joined U.S. Postal Service Pacific Area Vice President Michael J. Daley in dedicating the stamp on what would have been Hope’s 106th birthday. All 100 million stamps are available nationwide today.

“The U.S. Postal Service has taken on the task of honoring someone as monumental as Bob Hope on something the size of a postage stamp,” explained Daley. “This is quite a challenge considering he lived a lifetime lasting 100 years, had a successful career on stage, radio, television and film for more than seven decades and showed great generosity by giving immeasurable amounts of his time and talent to our men

and women in uniform. Even though all of his time spent on military bases around the world was as a civilian, it's significant that he was the first person recognized by the U.S. Congress as an honorary veteran of the United States Armed Forces. The First-Class stamp that we are unveiling is a wonderful portrait that preserves the memory of a First-Class citizen, Bob Hope. It is indeed time for us to say to him, thanks for the memory."

"I know Dad would have been thrilled by this honor," said Hope's daughter, Linda," but he probably would have joked about the increase in the price of stamps. In one of his monologues he said, 'Have you seen the new commemorative the Post Office is issuing? They feature pictures of people who died of shock when they heard what a stamp will cost.'" "Dad loved Golf," she added. "He often said he only did show business to pay greens fees."

Hope played on some 2,000 courses the world over and sank seven holes-in-one.

Although Hope never officially served in the U.S. Armed Forces, Hope dedicated a significant part of his life to entertaining America's men and women in uniform, starting in 1941 and continuing through Operation Desert Storm five decades later. After giving hundreds of performances overseas, he earned the nickname "G.I. Bob." He entertained military personnel on the USS Midway in 1972 in Singapore Harbor and again in 1987 in the western Pacific Ocean. Hope's thousands of honors also included the Congressional Gold Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Among his many friends were several U.S. Presidents, with whom he often played golf for charity.

### **Stamp Design**

Kazuhiko Sano of Mill Valley, CA, worked under the direction of art director Derry Noyes of Washington, DC, to create the stamp image. The image is based on a composite of 1980s photographs of Hope. In 2006, the Postmaster General reduced the time for a person to become eligible to be commemorated on a stamp from 10 years to five. Hope is the first to be honored under this criterion.

Additional information on Bob Hope and the USS Midway Museum is available at [www.bobhope.com](http://www.bobhope.com) and [www.midway.org](http://www.midway.org).

### **Postal Service Offers Military Mailing Discounts**

To coincide with the stamp issuance near the Memorial Day holiday, the Postal Service is extending Bob Hope's legacy of entertaining American men and women in uniform by encouraging communities nationwide to support the troops and send care packages to military personnel stationed around the world.

Care packages and reminders of home are a big morale boost for military service members stationed around the world. To help families and friends of military personnel, the Postal Service offers a discount on its largest Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes addressed to U.S. military overseas. The domestic mail prices for Priority Mail Large Flat Rate Box is normally \$13.95, but for packages addressed to U.S. military addresses overseas, the price will be reduced to only \$11.95. For more information, visit:

<http://www.usps.com/supportingourtroops/welcome.htm>.

### **Hope's Life and Career**

Hope (1903-2003) devoted his life to making people laugh. Well-known for his many television appearances, he also found success on the live stage, in radio shows, and in motion pictures. He became one of the most honored and beloved performers of the 20th century.

Leslie Townes Hope was born on May 29, 1903, in Eltham, England. He moved to the United States when he was only four years old and lived in Cleveland, OH, with his parents and six brothers. In 1920, he was granted U.S. citizenship by virtue of his father's naturalization. Hope enjoyed the spotlight, even at an early age: As a boy, he often entertained friends and family with his amusing impression of actor-comedian Charlie Chaplin. In his teens, he tried amateur boxing under the name of Packy East, but he decided to pursue other employment when he "was not only being carried out of the ring, but into the ring." Hope's natural talent for singing and dancing eventually led to touring on the vaudeville circuit. In the early stages of his career, he teamed up with several dancing partners, but he received the best audience feedback when adding jokes to his act and so he decided to try it alone as a comedian and master of ceremonies. Hope reached the pinnacle of vaudeville success in 1931 and 1932, playing the

venerable Palace Theatre in New York City.

In 1932, Hope got a part in the Broadway musical revue *Ballyhoo*. The next year, he gained major recognition playing the amiable, wisecracking Huckleberry Haines in the Broadway production of *Roberta*. During this time, he met and married singer Dolores DeFina, a marriage that lasted the rest of his life. On stage, he sang to Eve Arden in the 1936 *Ziegfeld Follies*, introducing the song "I Can't Get Started" by Ira Gershwin and Vernon Duke. His performance in *Follies* led to another successful role in *Red, Hot, and Blue* (also in 1936), with Ethel Merman and Jimmy Durante. Hope made guest appearances on several radio shows in the early and mid-1930s, and in 1938 he began headlining his own NBC program, *The Pepsodent Show*. This highly rated series featured an opening monologue of topical jokes — the influence of which can still be seen on late-night television talk shows.

Hope impressed audiences and producers in his first major film role, as Buzz Fielding in *The Big Broadcast of 1938*. With his co-star Shirley Ross, he performed what would become his theme song: "Thanks for the Memory." Hope was given a film contract with Paramount Pictures and went on to star in more than 50 feature films, including *Road to Singapore* and six more pictures in the *Road* series with Bing Crosby. Over the years, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences recognized Hope with two special awards (1940 and 1944), two honorary awards (1952 and 1965), and the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award (1959).

In April 1950, Hope headlined an Easter Sunday television special for NBC — "Star Spangled Revue" — a live broadcast from New York. For nearly five decades following that, he hosted nearly 300 comedy-variety TV specials for NBC and made hundreds of guest appearances on other shows. He was master of ceremonies for more Academy Awards® presentations than anyone else, including the first live telecast on March 19, 1953 and the first color broadcast in 1966. Hope died at his home in Toluca Lake, CA, on July 27, 2003, two months after his 100th birthday.

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#### **How to Order the First-Day-of-Issue Postmark**

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at their local Post Office™, at The Postal Store® website at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop), or by calling 800-STAMP-24. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others, and place them in a larger envelope addressed to:

Bob Hope Stamp  
Postmaster  
PO Box 85530  
San Diego, CA 92186-5530

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by July 30, 2009.

#### **How to Order First-Day Covers**

Stamp Fulfillment Services also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-STAMP-24 or writing to:

Information Fulfillment  
Dept. 6270  
U.S. Postal Service  
PO Box 219014  
Kansas City, MO 64121-9014

### Philatelic Products

There are five philatelic products available for this stamp issue:

- 464661, First-Day Cover, 82-cents.



- 464665, Digital Color Postmark, \$1.50.



- 464684, Uncut Press Sheet, \$79.20.



- 464691, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.



- 464699, Cancellation Keepsake with Digital Color Postmark, \$10.30.



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An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation, 149 million residences, businesses and Post Office Boxes, six days a week. It has 34,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products and services, not tax dollars, to pay for operating expenses. Named the Most Trusted Government Agency five consecutive years by the Ponemon Institute, the Postal Service has annual revenue of \$75 billion and delivers nearly half the world's mail.