

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 27, 2011

Contact: Mark Saunders
202-268-6524
mark.r.saunders@usps.gov
usps.com/news
Release No. 11-091



Postal Railway Mascot Gets Stamp of Approval *Postal Service Issues Pooch Postage*

To obtain high-resolution images of the stamps for media use only, email mark.r.saunders@usps.gov

WASHINGTON — The mascot that provided good luck to the Railway Mail Service returns today after a century after riding the rails and protecting the mail in the form of 60 million Owney the Postal Dog Forever stamps.

To celebrate the news, Owney, a resident of the Smithsonian's [National Postal Museum](http://www.si.edu/npm), is back with a makeover for the opening of a new exhibit that chronicles his adventures. The museum also is announcing an Owney photo [look-alike contest](#). Postal Service Owney related activities will take place at the Museum of Transportation in St. Louis, MO, and at the visitors' center in Albany, NY, today. Events will also take place in Toledo, OH, and Tucson, AZ today, and on Aug. 1, the Humane Society of Southern Arizona will host an Owney look-alike contest.

"With his new stamp and through the efforts of the National Postal Museum, Owney's legacy will transcend time, becoming as much a part of the Postal Service of the 21st century as he was more than 100 years ago," said Mary Anne Gibbons, Postal Service general counsel and executive vice president. "For almost 10 years, Owney was the much-beloved and well-traveled mascot of the Railway Mail Service."

Railway clerks believed Owney brought them good luck, since not a single train he rode was in an accident. During his life, Owney traveled by some estimates more than 140,000 miles. He even visited other countries representing the U.S. Post Office.

Joining Gibbons in dedicating the stamp were Allen Kane, director, National Postal Museum; William H. Bond, Owney stamp artist; Dirk Wales, author, and Stephen Kearney, manager, Stamp Services.

"The National Postal Museum is excited to offer many exciting activities and events in celebration of Owney's new stamp," said Kane. "And there's more to come — as we will soon be launching an Owney iPhone application and an Owney iPad interactive e-book, both of which will bring Owney to life."

The stamp art features an illustration of Owney by artist Bill Bond of Arlington, VA, under the direction of art director Phil Jordan of Falls Church, VA. The illustration depicts Owney in profile, facing left, with many of his famous tags and medals gleaming in the background.

The Owney stamps — like all Forever stamps will always equal the value of the current First-Class Mail one-ounce rate.

Owney: The 'Barkstory'

In the 1880s, during the height of the Railway Mail Service, clerks in the Albany, NY, Post Office took a liking to a mixed terrier named Owney. Fond of riding in postal wagons, Owney followed mailbags onto trains and soon was known as a good-luck charm to Railway Mail Service employees who made him their unofficial mascot. Working in the Railway Mail Service was highly dangerous. According to the National Postal Museum, more than 80 mail clerks were killed in train wrecks and more than 2,000 were injured between 1890 and 1900. However, it was said that no train ever met with trouble while Owney was aboard.

As Owney traveled the country, clerks affixed medals and [tags](#) to his collar to document his travels. When John Wanamaker, Postmaster General from 1889 to 1893, heard that Owney was overburdened with tags, he gave him a special harness to display them all.

Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at local Post Offices, at The Postal Store website at 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 larger envelopes addressed to:

Owney the Postal Dog Stamp
Special Cancellations
P.O. Box 92282
Washington, DC 20090-2282

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 Sept. 27, 2011.

How to Order First-Day Covers

The Postal Service 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

Ordering the Stamps and Related Products

In addition to the stamps, there are five philatelic products available for this [stamp](#) issue. Also, customers can order all stamps and products online at usps.com/shop, by calling 800 STAMP-24, or by using the mail-in order form in the *USA Philatelic Catalog*. Customers can subscribe to the catalog at beyondtheperf.com, usps.com/shop, or by calling 800 STAMP-24.

- 467561, First-Day Cover, 88-cents
- 467565, Digital Color Postmark, \$1.60.
- 467584, Uncut Press Sheet, \$88.00.
- 467591, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.
- 467599, Cancellation Keepsake (Digital Color Postmark w/Pane), \$10.95.

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses, and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

We're everywhere so you can be anywhere: uspseverywhere.com

#

Please note: For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at www.usps.com/news.

A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation, 150 million residences, businesses and Post Office Boxes. The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses, and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. With 32,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, *usps.com*, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$67 billion and delivers nearly 40 percent of the world's mail. If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 29th in the 2010 Fortune 500. *Black Enterprise* and *Hispanic Business* magazines ranked the Postal Service as a leader in workforce diversity. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency six consecutive years and the sixth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.