

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Sept. 4, 2012

Contact: Mark Saunders  
U.S. Postal Service  
[mark.r.saunders@usps.gov](mailto:mark.r.saunders@usps.gov)  
202-268-6524  
[www.usps.com/news](http://www.usps.com/news)  
Release No. 12-099



## Purple Heart Medal Forever Stamp Honors Veterans' Sacrifices

To obtain a high-resolution image of the stamp for media use only, email [mark.r.saunders@usps.gov](mailto:mark.r.saunders@usps.gov).

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Postal Service continues to honor the sacrifices of the men and women who serve in the U.S. military with the issuance of the new Purple Heart Medal Forever stamp.

First issued as a 37-cent First-Class stamp in 2003, this new Forever Stamp differs from the 2011 Forever Stamp design displaying a slightly larger image of the Medal on a pure white background.

Available nationwide today in sheets of 20, the stamps can be purchased online at [usps.com/shop](http://usps.com/shop) or by calling 800-STAMP-24 (800-782-6724). The date and location of the special dedication ceremony will be announced at a later time.

“The Postal Service salutes America’s veterans for their selfless sacrifice in defending our great nation,” said Stamp Service Manager Stephen Kearney. “We hope Americans will buy and use these Forever stamps when corresponding with loved ones and friends to honor these courageous men and women, who in many cases gave the ultimate sacrifice.”

### World’s Oldest Military Decoration

The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to members of the U.S. military who have been wounded or killed in action. According to the Military Order of the Purple Heart, an organization for combat-wounded veterans, the medal is “the oldest military decoration in the world in present use and the first award made available to a common soldier.”

Established by General George Washington during the Revolutionary War, the badge of distinction for meritorious action — a heart made of purple cloth — was discontinued after the war. In 1932, on the 200th anniversary of Washington’s birth, the decoration was reinstated and redesigned as a purple heart of metal bordered by gold, suspended from a purple and white

ribbon. In the center of the medal is a profile bust of George Washington beneath his family coat of arms.

Customers may view the Purple Heart Medal Forever Stamp, as well as many of this year's other stamps, indicate which stamps they like and vote for their favorite stamp on Facebook at [facebook.com/USPSStamps](http://facebook.com/USPSStamps), through *Twitter* [@USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps) or on the website *Beyond the Perf* at [beyondtheperf.com/2012-preview](http://beyondtheperf.com/2012-preview). Beyond the Perf is the Postal Service's online site for background information on upcoming stamp subjects, first-day-of-issue events and other philatelic news.

#### **How to Obtain 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 a local Post Office, at The Postal Store website at [usps.com/shop](http://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:

Purple Heart Medal Stamp  
Special Cancellations  
PO 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 Nov. 5, 2012.

#### **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*, online at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop), or by calling 800-782-6724. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-782-6724 or writing to:

U.S. Postal Service  
Catalog Request  
PO Box 219014  
Kansas City, MO 64121-9014

#### **Philatelic Products**

Three philatelic products are available for this stamp issue:

115461, First-Day Cover, 89 cents.  
115484, Uncut Press Sheet without die cut (3 random panes), \$27 (print quantity of 2,000).  
115493, Cancellation Keepsake, \$9.95.

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

###

**Please Note:** For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at <http://about.usps.com/news/welcome.htm>.

For reporters interested in speaking with a regional Postal Service public relations professional, please go to <http://about.usps.com/news/media-contacts/usps-local-media-contacts.pdf>.

A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation — 151 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](http://usps.com)®, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$65 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 35th in the 2011 Fortune 500.

In 2011, Oxford Strategic Consulting ranked the U.S. Postal Service number one in overall service performance of the posts in the top 20 wealthiest nations in the world. *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 for six years and the sixth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

Follow the Postal Service on [www.twitter.com/USPSstamps](http://www.twitter.com/USPSstamps) and at [www.facebook.com/USPSSTAMPS](http://www.facebook.com/USPSSTAMPS)