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National: Roy Betts
roy.a.betts@usps.gov
202.268.3207

Seattle: Ernie Swanson
ernst.a.swanson@usps.gov
253.214.1830

usps.com/news




Lunar New Year Stamp Rings in 2017

Year of the Rooster Newest Addition to Stamp Series

SEATTLE — The U.S. Postal Service today dedicated the Year of the Rooster Forever stamp, the 10th of 12 stamps in the Celebrating Lunar New Year [series](#) during a First-Day-of-Issue ceremony at the [Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience](#).

Considered the most important holiday of the year for many Asian communities around the world, the Lunar New Year is celebrated primarily by people of Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tibetan and Mongolian heritage.

In the United States and elsewhere, the occasion is marked in various ways, including parades featuring enormous and vibrantly painted papier-mâché dragons, parties and other special events. Vendors at outdoor markets sell flowers, toys, food and other items. Musicians play drums to celebrate a time of renewed hope for the future. Many families present red envelopes (*hongbao*), like the one depicted in the stamp art, containing money to children and loved ones.

"Today's event is important, not only because it's our first stamp dedication of the new calendar year, but also because it gives the Postal Service a chance to reinforce our commitment to celebrate America's great diversity through our stamps," said Greg Graves, vice president, Western Area Operations, who dedicated the stamp. "The beautiful Year of the Rooster Forever stamp is a sterling example of the Postal Service's mission to issue stamps that demonstrate our country's deep regard for its rich, multi-cultural heritage."

Graves was joined at the stamp dedication by Yibo Lu, director, Chinese Radio Seattle's CRS Office; Beth Takekawa, executive director, The Wing Luke Museum; Ron Chew, chief executive officer, Chew Communications; and Assunta Ng, founder and publisher, Seattle Chinese Post and Northwest Asian Weekly.

The Postal Service introduced this Celebrating Lunar New Year series in 2008 and will continue the series through 2019 with stamps for the Years of the Dog and Boar. This is the second series honoring Lunar New Year. The first ran in 1992 to 2007. Year of the Rooster is being issued as a souvenir sheet of 12 self-adhesive Forever stamps. The public is asked to share the news of the stamp using the hashtag **#LunarNewYear**.

Art director Ethel Kessler worked on the series with illustrator Kam Mak, a Hong Kong-born artist who grew up in New York City's Chinatown and now lives in Brooklyn. The artwork focuses on some of the common ways the Lunar New Year holiday is celebrated. For the Year of the Rooster, the illustration — originally created using oil paints on panel — depicts a colorful rooster emblazoned on a red envelope. The color red symbolizes luck in Chinese culture, while rooster imagery is often used to ward off evil spirits. The characters at the top of the envelope form a common Chinese greeting of celebration and wish for prosperity and good fortune, used most frequently during Lunar New Year.

Kessler's stamp design also incorporates two elements from the previous series of Lunar New Year stamps: Clarence Lee's intricate cut-paper design of a rooster and the Chinese character for "rooster," drawn in grass-style calligraphy by Lau Bun.

Customers may purchase the Year of the Rooster Forever stamp at usps.com/stamps, at the [Postal Store usps.com/shop](https://usps.com/shop), by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724) and at Post Offices nationwide. A variety of stamps and collectibles also is available at ebay.com/stamps.

Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks

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

Year of the Rooster
Stamp Fulfillment Services
Cancellation Services
8300 NE Underground Drive, Pillar 210
Kansas City, MO 64144-9998

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for postmarks up to a quantity of 50. For more than 50, customers are charged 5 cents each. All orders must be postmarked by March 5, 2017.

Ordering First-Day Covers

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamps and 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 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

There are eight philatelic products for this stamp issue:

552006, Press Sheet with Die-cut, \$33.84
552010, Digital Color Postmark Keepsake (2 panes), \$12.95.
552016, First-Day Cover, \$0.91.
552018, First-Day Cover Full Pane, \$8.14.
552019, Cancelled Full Pane, \$8.14.
552021, Digital Color Postmark, \$1.62.
552024, Framed Art, \$39.95.

552030, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.

Many of this year's other stamps may be viewed on Facebook at facebook.com/USPSStamps or via Twitter [@USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps).

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

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