

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **U.S. Postal Service Dedicates New Forever Stamp Commemorating 200th Anniversary of the Flag Act of 1818** *Stamp Ceremony Spotlights at Nation's Oldest Flag Day Parade*

APPLETON, WI — The U.S. Postal Service today marks a historic milestone with the issuance of a new Forever stamp celebrating the bicentennial anniversary of the Flag Act of 1818. Today's issuance coincides with the 68<sup>th</sup> annual Appleton Flag Day Parade, recognized as the nation's oldest Flag Day parade.

"The U.S. Postal Service has a long history of displaying the American flag on our stamps," said Patrick Mendonca, senior director, Office of the Postmaster General and CEO, who dedicated the stamp. "Today, we celebrate the Flag Act of 1818, which established the framework of our country's flag, and in the process gave birth to what has become a globally recognized symbol of independence, hope and pride."

Joining Mendonca to unveil the stamp were Tim Hanna, Appleton mayor; Greg Otis, chairman, Appleton Parade Committee; Corey Otis, Appleton Parade Committee member; and Erin Davisson and Tom Zalaski, news anchors, WFRV-TV 5 (CBS).

Two hundred years ago, the Flag Act of 1818 established the basic design of the current American flag: 13 stripes and one star for each state in the Union.

Prior to the Flag Act of 1818, the nation's official flag showed 15 stars and 15 stripes. The expansion of the union to 20 states in 1817 required a flag reconfiguration. Rather than increasing the number of stripes each time a new state joined the union, the Flag Act reduced their number to 13, signifying the original 13 colonies, and increased the number of stars to reflect the current number of states in the union. The act specified that a new star would be added on the Fourth of July following the admission of a new state.

The U.S. flag has had 50 stars since July 4, 1960, when Hawaii became the 50th state.

The Flag Act of 1818 stamp art features a flag with 20 stars, the number of states in the Union when the Flag Act of 1818 went into effect. The flag's crisp folds and layering effect convey a sense of the dynamism of the young nation. Ethel Kessler directed the project while Kit Hinrichs assisted with both stamp design and typography. Share the news of the stamp on social media by using the hashtag **#FlagActStamp**.

Customers may purchase the Flag Act of 1818 Forever stamp at The Postal Store at [usps.com/shop](https://usps.com/shop), by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724) or at Post Office facilities nationwide. A variety of stamps and collectibles also are available at [ebay.com/stamps](https://ebay.com/stamps).

### **Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks**

Customers have 120 days to obtain first-day-of-issue postmarks by mail. They must affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others and place them in envelopes addressed to:

FDOI – Flag Act of 1818 Stamp  
USPS Stamp Fulfillment Services  
8300 NE Underground Drive, Suite 300  
Kansas City, MO 64144-9900

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 Oct. 9, 2018.

### **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 *USA Philatelic* publication at [usps.com/shop](https://usps.com/shop). Customers may register to receive a free *USA Philatelic* publication online at [usps.com/philatelic](https://usps.com/philatelic).

### **Philatelic Products**

Philatelic products for this stamp issue are available at [usps.com/shop](https://usps.com/shop).

- 477800, Flag Act of 1818, \$0.50.
- 477810, Keepsake, \$11.95
- 477816, First-Day Cover, \$0.94.
- 477821, Digital Color Postmark, \$1.65.
- 477824, Framed Art, \$39.95
- 477830, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.

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

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