



POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Mark Saunders

(O)202-268-6524

(C)202-320-0782

mark.r.saunders@usps.gov

usps.com/news

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Postal Service Issues a Blizzard of Holiday Stamps

High-resolution images of the stamps are available for media use only by emailing mark.r.saunders@usps.gov

NEW YORK — The Postal Service starts delivering the 2009 holiday season by issuing the Winter Holidays stamps today and the Hanukkah and Kwanzaa stamps tomorrow at the American Stamp Dealers Association Mega Stamp Show in New York City.

“We hope Americans will use these stamps to spread the joy of the Holidays on cards and letters across the nation this holiday season,” said David Failor, U.S. Postal Service executive director of Stamp Services.



Winter Holidays

The Winter Holidays stamps feature a reindeer, snowman, gingerbread man and toy soldier. A merry reindeer dangles a red bulb ornament from his antler. Flurries of large flakes dust a snowman sporting a top hat, coal buttons and a carrot nose. The gingerbread man is decorated for the season with green, red, and white icing. The toy soldier smiles while standing at attention. Borders of evergreens, stars, wreaths, and holly add another holiday touch to the stamps.

These popular figures are seen throughout the holidays, decorating homes, schools, and stores from Thanksgiving to New Year's. They also appear in gift wrap designs and are the subjects of several favorite songs and stories. As stamp art, they will add a festive touch to letters and cards sent to friends and family.

This is the first Postal Service stamp project for artist Joseph Cudd. His company, Brushworks Studio, in Greensboro, NC, is primarily a gift wrap and print design firm. To create these stamps under the direction of Richard Sheaff of Scottsdale, AZ, Cudd first sketched the designs by hand and then finished them on the computer using a graphics tablet. More than 1.5 billion 44-cent First-Class stamps are available in booklets of 20 and ATM booklets of 18.



Hanukkah

The new 2009 Hanukkah design features a photograph of a menorah with nine lit candles. The menorah was designed by Lisa Regan of the Garden Deva Sculpture Company in Tulsa, OK, and photographed by Ira Wexler of Braddock Heights, MD. Carl T. Herrman of North Las Vegas, NV, was the art director. All 35 million 44 cent First-Class stamps, available in sheets of 20, go on sale tomorrow.

The 2009 Hanukkah stamp is the third U.S. issuance to commemorate the holiday. The Postal Service issued its first Hanukkah stamp, which featured a stylized illustration of a menorah, in 1996. A design featuring an ornate dreidel followed in 2004.



Kwanzaa

The U.S. Postal Service celebrates Kwanzaa, a non-religious holiday that takes place over seven days from December 26 to January 1. Kwanzaa draws on African traditions and takes its name from the phrase for "first fruits" in Swahili, a widely spoken African language. Stamp artist Lloyd McNeill of New York City, under the direction of Carl T. Herrman, created this new, festive, highly symbolic design to celebrate the holiday.

The bold colors in the stamp art are complemented in the top right corner by the colors of the Kwanzaa flag — green for growth, red for blood, and black for the African people — which are the same colors as the Pan-African flag. The field of green around the borders symbolizes growth and a bountiful harvest. In the hoop that the girl holds in her hands, as well as in the family grouping of mother, father, and child, McNeill symbolized unity. This is the third stamp design issued by the U.S. Postal Service in celebration of Kwanzaa. The first Kwanzaa commemorative stamp was issued in 1997. Thirty million 44-cent First-Class stamps, available in sheets of 20, go on sale tomorrow.

The 2009 Christmas: *Madonna and Sleeping Child* by Sassoferrato stamp will be dedicated Oct. 20, 2009, at the Hearst Castle in San Simeon, CA.

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 Web site at 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:

(Winter Holidays) (Hanukkah) (Kwanzaa) Stamp(s)

Postmaster

421 Eighth Ave., Rm. 2029B

New York, NY 10199-9998

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 Dec. 9, 2009, for the *Winter Holidays* stamps and Dec. 10, 2009, for the *Hanukkah* and *Kwanzaa* stamps.

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[Winter Holidays stamps:](#)

- 573763, ATM Booklet First-Day Cover Set of 4, \$3.28.
- 678563, Booklet First-Day Cover Set of 4, \$3.28.
- 678568, Booklet Digital Color Postmark Set of 4, \$6.
- 678591, Ceremony Program w/4 stamps, \$6.95.
- 678599, Cancellation Keepsake (4 Digital Color Postmark covers with sheet), \$14.80.

[Hanukkah stamp:](#)

- 573561, First-Day Cover, \$0.82.
- 573591, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.
- 573593, Cancellation Keepsake (First-Day Cover w/pane), \$9.62.

[Kwanzaa stamp:](#)

- 573461, First-Day Cover, \$0.82.
- 573491, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.
- 573493, Cancellation Keepsake (w/pane), \$9.62.

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