

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Nov. 9, 2012

Contact: Mark Saunders
mark.r.saunders@usps.gov
202-268-6524
www.usps.com/news
Release No. 12-127



Purple Heart Medal Forever Stamp Honors Veterans' Sacrifices

Postal Service Encourages Writing Letters to Service Members

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

WASHINGTON — Second only to the Pentagon in hiring veterans, the Postal Service employs more than 108,000 former service men and women — comprising nearly one in five employees in its career workforce. Today, almost 1,000 dedicated postal employees continue to serve in an active duty status.

With Veterans' Day just around the corner, the Postal Service is encouraging America to salute the sacrifices of the men and women who serve in the U.S. military by using the new Purple Heart Medal Forever stamp issued in early September.

"The Postal Service helps families stay connected to their loved ones who defend our country," said Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe. "Service members look forward to letters from home. When springing into action, letters from home are not left behind on a cot or at the bottom of a duffel bag. Those letters are tucked safely in pockets. They're kept close to their heart — and they're pulled out and read again and again."

Mail sent to service members at Army Post Office (APO), Fleet Post Office (FPO) and Diplomat Post Office (DPO) addresses is mailed at the domestic rather than international price. As a domestic stamp, the Purple Heart Medal Forever stamp is good for mailing one-ounce cards and letters addressed to individuals at these locations. Using the current First-Class one-ounce letter price, the stamp can also be applied to mailing packages.

First issued as a 37-cent First-Class stamp in 2003, the Purple Heart stamp was reprinted four times due to its popularity. It was then issued as a Forever Stamp in 2011, and this new version shows a slightly larger image of the medal on a pure white background.

Available nationwide in sheets of 20, the stamps can be purchased online at usps.com/stamps

by calling 800-STAMP-24 (800-782-6724).

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 on Facebook at facebook.com/USPSStamps, through [Twitter @USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps) or on the website *Beyond the Perf* at 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.

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®, 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 and at www.facebook.com/USPSSTAMPS