



## POSTAL NEWS

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*High-resolution images of the stamp are available for media use only by emailing: [roy.a.betts@usps.gov](mailto:roy.a.betts@usps.gov).*

### **U.S. Postal Service Launches Music Icons Series with Stamp Honoring Tejano Music Trailblazer Lydia Mendoza**

*Pioneering "Lark of The Border" Recognized for Enormous Contribution to Culture and Music*

SAN ANTONIO — In tribute to the legends responsible for making American music part of global popular culture, the U.S. Postal Service today proudly announces the launch of a new Music Icons stamp series with the issuance of a stamp honoring Lydia Mendoza, one of the first and greatest stars of Tejano music.

The Lydia Mendoza Forever Stamp was dedicated today during a special ceremony featuring actor Jesse Borrego as master of ceremony at the Guadalupe Cultural Center in San Antonio, TX. Mendoza is the first to be honored in the Postal Service's new Music Icons series, which will include legends Ray

Charles and Johnny Cash later this year.

The stamp is now available for purchase at local Post Offices, online at [www.usps.com/stamps](http://www.usps.com/stamps) or by calling 800- STAMP24 (800-782-6724). As a Forever Stamp, it is good for mailing 1-ounce First-Class Mail letters anytime in the future regardless of price changes.

“The Postal Service is proud to introduce its new Music Icons stamp series with the issuance of this Forever Stamp honoring the first lady of Tejano music, Lydia Mendoza,” said Marie Therese Dominguez, vice president, Government Relations and Public Policy. “Mendoza was a true American pioneer, whose unique voice and style of singing, paved the way for a whole new generation of Latino performers. Her impact on music guarantees her place in American music history, and today her legacy continues on 30 million postage stamps.”

To help dedicate the new stamp, Dominguez was joined by Jesse Borrego, best known for the role of Jesse Velasquez in the hit TV series, *Fame*; San Antonio singer Rita Vidaurri, who is a member of the group Las Tesoros that often accompanied Lydia Mendoza; Patty Ortiz, executive director, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center; Tejano musician Eva Ibarra; and several members of the Mendoza family.

Known as *La Alondra de la Frontera*, the *Lark of the Border*, Mendoza performed the Spanish-language music of the Texas-Mexico borderlands and beyond.

Best known for her solo performances, Mendoza, with her soulful voice accompanied only by the playing of her 12-string guitar, recorded more than a thousand songs in an enduring career that spanned seven decades. Through her music, she gave a voice not only to the poor and working-class people North and South of the border, but also to Latinos throughout the Western Hemisphere. Her enormous repertoire of *canciones*, *boleros*, *corridos*, *danzas*, and tangos included ballads about historic figures and songs about hard work, lost love, and the joys of everyday life.

Mendoza was born in May 1916 in Houston, Texas. She grew up in Monterrey, Mexico, and in towns along the border. She was born into a musical family; both her mother and maternal grandmother played the guitar. Mendoza began to emulate them when she was four years old, nailing rubber bands to a piece of wood to create her own instrument. She learned to sing and play the guitar from her mother, her greatest musical influence. Mendoza also learned to play the violin and mandolin, but it was the 12-string guitar that would become her signature instrument.

In the early 1930s, the Mendozas moved to San Antonio and began performing in the city’s famous Plaza del Zacate. Lydia’s big break came when she won a singing contest on the radio, which led to her family signing a contract with Bluebird Records in 1934. The producers asked Lydia to record some solo cuts. Among them was “Mal Hombre” or “Evil Man,” a song about a coldhearted man who breaks his lover’s heart. Years before, Lydia had learned the lyrics, which were printed on a gum wrapper. “Mal Hombre” soon became a hit. The Mendozas moved up in the musical world, performing in new venues such as clubs and theaters. By the time World War II broke out, Lydia had recorded more than 200 songs.

The war temporarily slowed Mendoza’s career. In the late 1940s, now married and with children of her own, she returned to recording and performing. Non-Spanish-speaking audiences started discovering Mendoza’s music in the 1970s. As her fame spread, she began to be recognized as an American folk icon and was invited to sing at new venues, such as folk festivals and college campuses. In 1977, Mendoza sang at Jimmy Carter’s inaugural celebration. She continued to tour and record in the 1980s. In 1982, Mendoza received a National Heritage Award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Increasingly recognized as a national treasure, she was inducted into the Tejano Music Hall of Fame.

Mendoza retired from music in 1988 after suffering a stroke. In 1999, she was awarded the National Medal of the Arts by President Clinton. In his speech, Clinton remarked, “Her legacy is as wide and

deep as the Rio Grande Valley.”

Lydia Mendoza died in San Antonio, TX, Dec. 20, 2007, at the age of 91. Her recordings continue to be collected and played on the radio. Today, Mendoza is remembered as a musical pioneer who not only popularized Mexican-American music, but also carved out a career that was unique for a woman of her time, thereby breaking down barriers for the next generation.

The artwork for the Lydia Mendoza stamp features an undated, black-and-white publicity photo of Mendoza taken for Ideal Records in the 1950s. The flag of Texas is superimposed over the singer's image, with its vertical blue bar and single white star covering the left half of the photo and its horizontal red stripe embellishing the bottom right corner.

The square stamp captures the look of a 45-rpm record sleeve. The stamp pane evokes the appearance of a 45-rpm single peeking out of a record sleeve above the stamps themselves. On the reverse side, the pane includes a larger version of the photograph featured on the stamp art as well as the logo for the Music Icons series. Neal Ashby and Patrick Donahue designed the stamp, working with art director Antonio Alcalá.

Customers can view the new stamps, as well as many of this year's other stamps, on Facebook at [facebook.com/USPSStamps](https://www.facebook.com/USPSStamps), on Twitter [@USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps) or on the website *Beyond the Perf* at [beyondtheperf.com/2013-preview](http://beyondtheperf.com/2013-preview). *Beyond the Perf* is the Postal Service's online site for information on upcoming stamp subjects, first-day-of-issue events and other philatelic news.

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

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase the new stamps at local Post Offices, at [usps.com/stamps](http://usps.com/stamps) or by calling 800-STAMP-24. They should apply the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others and place them in larger envelopes addressed to:

Lydia Mendoza Stamp  
U.S. Postal Service  
10410 Perrin Beitel Rd.  
San Antonio, TX 78284-9998

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 for fewer than 50 requests. All orders must be postmarked by July 15.

#### **Ordering 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 [usps.com/stamps](http://usps.com/stamps) 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 11 philatelic products available:

- [579206, Press Sheet w/Die Cuts, \\$58.88 \(print quantity of 2,500\)](#)
- [579208, Press Sheet w/o Die Cuts, \\$58.88 \(print quantity of 2,500\)](#)
- [579216, First-Day Cover, \\$.90](#)

- [579218, First-Day Cover \(Full Pane\), \\$9.86](#)
- [579219, First-Day Cancelled \(Full Pane\), \\$9.86](#)
- [579221, Digital Color Postmark, \\$1.61](#)
- [579230, Ceremony Program, \\$6.95](#)
- 579231, Stamp Deck Card, \$.95
- 579232, Stamp Deck Card w/Digital Color Postmark, \$1.96
- [579210, Keepsake \(Pane & Digital Color Postmark Set\), \\$9.00](#)
- [579224, Poster, \\$14.95](#)

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

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

Links to the following songs on this playlist of Lydia Mendoza songs: "<https://rd.io/i/QRdcBDN5Azl/>", "<https://rd.io/i/QRdcBDN5Azl/>," "<https://rd.io/i/QRdcBDN5Azl/>".

"Mal Hombre" from The Best of Lydia Mendoza  
 "Pero Hay Que Triste" from Mal Hombre  
 "Amor Bonito" from First Queen of Tejano Music  
 "Mundo Enganoso" from Mal Hombre  
 "La Prieta" from La Alondra de la Frontera  
 "Celosa" from Las Más Pegadas  
 "Sigue Adelante" from Mal Hombre  
 "Soy Rebelde" from First Queen of Tejano Music  
 "Contestacion a 'Amor Que Malo Eres'" from The Best of Lydia Mendoza  
 "Te Quieres Ir" from First Queen of Tejano Music  
 "Larga Condena" from La Alondra de la Frontera  
 "Amor Con Amor Se Paga" from First Queen of Tejano Music  
 "Que Desconsuelo" from La Alondra de la Frontera  
 "Monterrey" from The Very Best of Lydia Mendoza

#### About The U.S. Postal Service

A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation: 152 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 more than 31,000 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 42nd in the 2012 Fortune 500. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency for seven years and the fourth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

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