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Postal Service Salutes Military Service Cross Recipients on Memorial Day with Forever Stamps

NEW YORK CITY — On Monday, May 30, the national day of remembrance for those who died while serving their nation, the U.S. Postal Service honored military service members who have been awarded one of the four Service Cross Medals — the Army Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, which includes the Marine Corps, the Air Force Cross and the Coast Guard Cross.

The Memorial Day first-day-of-issue dedication ceremony for the [Honoring Extraordinary Heroism: The Service Cross Medals](#) Forever stamps took place at New York City's Jacob K. Javits Convention Center as part of the world's largest stamp show that only takes place in the United States once a decade, [World Stamp Show-NY 2016](#). More than 250,000 visitors are expected to attend this week-long event. The public is asked to share the news on social media using the hashtag **#ServiceCrossStamps**.

U.S. Coast Guard New York Sector Deputy Commander Captain Thomas Morkan joined U.S. Postal Service Chief Information Officer and Executive Vice President Kristin Seaver in dedicating the stamps .

"Story after story, act after act reveals a new profile in courage and a spirit of American greatness that has defined this nation from the very beginning," said Seaver. "These medals — and these stamps — pay homage to such heroic actions and dedication to duty."

"It takes extraordinary heroism to be awarded such a decoration and frequently it requires the ultimate sacrifice," said Morkan. "That type of sacrifice, that willingness to lay your life on the line for your country is what we as a nation pause to reflect upon and to pay homage to on Memorial Day. It is a great day for parades and celebrations and backyard barbecues with family and friends — but it is also the day that we honor those who since the war of independence have done what needed to be done.

Their willingness to hazard all, to pay any price, to never tire, to never cease to struggle is why we are a free and proud people, citizens of the greatest nation on this earth. That struggle is never ending. Service men and women are in harm's way today at this very moment. As you enjoy your barbeque and the company of family and friends, I ask that you spare a few moments to honor those who so willingly make it possible."

The Service Cross Medals

Many recipients of these awards died or were severely wounded as a result of the valorous actions for which they were honored, while a number of others died in subsequent battles before receiving the award for their earlier actions. Many recipients rescued wounded service members or drew enemy fire to buy time for others to regroup or be rescued. Some continued fighting despite their own wounds. According to official accounts, all braved enemy fire, made bold decisions and took selfless actions to rescue or protect their fellow service members. These medals pay homage to such valorous actions and dedication to duty.

The Distinguished Service Cross was the first of these decorations to be established, in 1918, followed the next year by the Navy Cross. The Air Force Cross was instituted in 1960, following the creation of the Air Force as a separate military service independent from the Army. The Coast Guard Cross was only recently instituted, in 2010, to recognize its members for qualifying actions taken when not operating under the Department of the Navy or during military operations against international terrorists. This decoration is yet to be awarded.

The Service Cross Medals are the second highest military decoration for valor in combat, after the Medal of Honor. In the official language authorized by congressional legislation, the Service Cross Medals are given for extraordinary heroism not justifying the award of a Medal of Honor while:

- engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States;
- engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or
- serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

The Postal Service previously issued Medal of Honor Forever Stamps honoring recipients who served in [World War II](#), the [Korean War](#) and the [Vietnam War](#).

Art director Greg Breeding of Charlottesville, VA, designed the stamps and stamp sheet, working with photographs of the medals by Richard Frasier of Vienna, VA. The photographs were taken on location at The [Institute of Heraldry](#), Department of the Army, which provided the actual decorations used in these images.

Leveraging Technology

The U.S. Postal Service is introducing four new products tailored to stamp collectors at the World Stamp Show – NY2016:

- The self-adhesive Classics Forever Stamps that will be dedicated Wed., June 1, will be the first water soluble First-Class Forever stamps. Desirable to collectors of stamps from delivered mail, the stamps can be removed from envelopes undamaged — simply using water.
- World Stamp Show Souvenir Portfolio, a coffee-table book featuring each of the eight stamp issues to be released during the show will include 3-D, augmented reality. The first pane of the book includes a pane of the August 2015 World Stamp Show stamps. Collectors are encouraged to collect a new pane each day.
- 2015 eGuide to U.S. Stamps, a fully digital version of the latest Postal Service Guide to Stamps includes all of the content in the beautifully re-designed printed edition. It features high-resolution stamp art with comprehensive search capabilities and pinch and zoom viewing options. The eGuide is available at [usps.com](#), [Amazon.com](#), [barnesandnoble.com](#) and iTunes along with 1,000 other e-tailers.

- USPS StampApp, the only official cloud-based U.S. stamp collecting app that includes an entire stamp reference library along with user-generated content for stamp collectors to upload their own stamp collection. It is available on usps.com, Apple's App Store and Google Play.

At the World Stamp Show – NY 2016, the U.S. Postal Service will hold an official stamp dedication almost every day of the show to introduce a total of eight new stamp subjects.

Ordering the 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 website at usps.com/shop or by calling 800-782-6724. 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:

Honoring Extraordinary Heroism:
The Service Cross Medals Stamps
Special Events Coordinator
380 West 33rd Street
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 up to a quantity of 50. There is a 5-cent charge for each additional postmark over 50. All orders must be postmarked by July 30, 2016.

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/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 six philatelic products for this stamp issue:

- 561124, Framed Art, \$39.95.
- 561106, Press Sheet with Die-cut, \$67.68.
- 561110, Keepsake (set of 4), \$12.95.
- 561116, First-Day Cover (set of 4), \$3.64.
- 561121, Digital Color Postmark (set of 4), \$6.48.
- 561130, Ceremony Program (random single), \$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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