



## POSTAL NEWS

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### **Love Takes to the Air Tomorrow on New Love Skywriting Forever Stamp** *Skywriting Pilot Linked to Lindbergh Replicating Stamp Image*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Postal Service's new [Love Skywriting Forever stamp](#) image will be replicated – weather permitting – by a skywriting pilot linked to iconic aviator Charles Lindbergh at noon tomorrow following the 10 a.m. PT/1 p.m. ET First-Day-of-Issue ceremony that takes place at the [Planes of Fame Air Museum](#) in Chino, CA. A test flight is also scheduled to fill the skies over Chino with the giant word “Love” today.

The event tomorrow will stream live on the [Postal Service's Facebook page](#). Customers are asked to spread the news using the hashtag **#LoveStamp**.

“The Postal Service issued its first Love stamp in 1973, and over the years, these stamps have dressed up billions of birthday greetings, wedding invitations, birth announcements, and, of course, Valentine’s Day cards and letters,” said U.S. Postal Service Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President [David Williams](#). “From the moment they’re spotted on an envelope, these miniature works of art foretell good news. And with this particular stamp, we can really say, once and for all, that ‘love is in the air’ — and in the mail.”

Scheduled to join Williams in the ceremony are [Operation Gratitude](#) Vice President and Chief Development Officer Chris Clark; [Skytypers](#) President Stephen Stinis and Planes of Fame Air Museum aviation historian and Air Museum moderator Kevin Thompson. Skytypers CEO and Squadron Commander Greg Stinis will fly the skywriting demonstration.

This new stamp is a cheerful and romantic continuation of the U.S. Postal Service's Love stamp series. The Love Skywriting stamp will add a romantic touch to letters and cards, not only on Valentine's Day, but all year round.

The stamp art depicts the word "Love" written in white cursive script against a blue sky with wispy clouds and the edges of the letters just beginning to blur. Underlining the word is a decorative swirl of smoke that emphasizes the message. A small, stylized plane, dwarfed by the giant letters, completes the end of the swirl, with smoke trailing from its tail.

### **The Lost Art of Skywriting**

Skywriting had its heyday as an advertising medium from the 1920s to the 1950s. A message is created by a small airplane that emits vaporized fluid from its exhaust system to form letters in the air. Still used occasionally for advertising slogans, skywriting today commonly broadcasts romantic — and very public — declarations of love.

"I think it's safe to say more people have walked on the moon than are professional skywriters today," said Greg Stinis, who began skywriting more than 50 years ago while working for his father, [Andy Stinis, who started the company in 1932](#), and whose plane hangs in the [Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum](#).

### **The Lindbergh Connection**

"My Dad was friends with Charles Lindbergh and helped him push the [Spirit of St. Louis](#) onto the runway for his historic 1927 [New York to Paris solo flight](#). Similar to [Lindbergh](#), Dad also flew mail for 20 years in his amphibious Mallard aircraft to Walker's Cay in the Bahamas."

### **The Five Square Mile Palette in the Sky**

After Stinis takes off Jan. 7 from the [Chino airport](#) in his [Grumman Tiger \(AA5-B\)](#), he will first search to find a 5-mile square palette of turbulence-free sky to avoid distorting the writing. This can take as long as a half hour. His "paint" will be an environmentally safe parrifin-based liquid that is injected into the plane's exhaust manifold before it passes through a 3-inch diameter exhaust pipe and mushroom to a 60-foot diameter vapor.

To replicate the stamp image, the "L" in Love will be 6,000 feet tall — more than four times the height of the Empire State Building. The remaining letters will each be 2,000 feet tall. It will take about 10 minutes to complete. Stinis' "pen" will scribe between 135 mph and near-stall speed as he makes the tight, curly elements in the letters. He will not have enough liquid to create the swirl below the word as depicted on the stamp image. Once completed the skywriting should be visible for 20 miles.

"I've created more than 2,000 skywritings in 50 years, and this one will be one of most challenging because the letter "L" is three times the size of the others and in script," said Stinis. "I usually create block letters, so the timing and visual ques and maneuvers are new. Time is against me. Once I start I can't stop writing or the whole message will blow away."

[Louise Fili](#) of New York City designed the stamp, which is illustrated by [Jessica Hische](#) of San Francisco. [Derry Noyes](#) of Washington, DC, was the art director. The Love Skywriting stamp is being issued as a Forever stamp and will always be equal to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price.

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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