

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Postal Service to Dedicate Forever Stamps Honoring Diversity in Children's Books

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BROOKLYN, NY — Tomorrow, the U.S. Postal Service showcases the work of Ezra Jack Keats' most beloved story, [The Snowy Day](#), on Forever stamps. Written and illustrated by the celebrated children's author, it was one of the first prominent 20th-century picture books devoted to an African-American child.

Free and open to the public, the 10:30 a.m. ceremony will take place at the [Brooklyn Public Library Central Library](#), 10 Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn. Followers of the Postal Service's Facebook page can view the event live at facebook.com/USPS.

Each of the four new stamps in this 20-stamp booklet features a different illustration of main character Peter exploring and playing in his neighborhood while wearing his iconic red snowsuit. The images include: Peter forming a snowball, Peter sliding down a mountain of snow, Peter making a snow angel and Peter leaving footprints in the snow.

Since the publication of this treasured tale five decades ago young readers have enjoyed joining Peter on his winter adventure. Unlike most popular children's authors at the time, Keats made a point to feature ethnically and racially diverse characters in his work. Inspired by a series of 1940 *Life* magazine photographs of a young African-American boy, Keats began writing *The Snowy Day*. Using paper collage, fabric, stamps and India ink, he crafted the unique look of the story's wintry urban landscape.

Edited by Annis Duff and published in 1962, *The Snowy Day* has become a classic. Since its release, it

has sold millions of copies.

As Peter starred in six more Keats stories, readers watched him grow older in print. Before the author's death in 1983, he wrote and illustrated 22 children's books and provided artwork for dozens more. Countless readers identified with his characters and stories, which brought added diversity to mainstream children's literature.

"I am honored to represent the Postal Service as we dedicate four stamps that feature an iconic image that has had a positive impact on children for more than 50 years," said U.S. Postal Service Government Relations and Public Policy Acting Executive Director Roderick Sallay.

"In 1962, a groundbreaking book hit the library shelves — *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats. Before this book, children of color — African-American children, in particular — saw very little representation of themselves in picture books," added Sallay. "And then came Peter. A young boy who awoke to find the world outside his window blanketed in snow, and who couldn't wait to get outside and play. Through Peter, children of color found a positive representation of themselves, which instilled a sense of pride and self-acceptance. One that said, I both fit and I belong."

Scheduled to join Sallay in the ceremony are Brooklyn Public Library President and CEO [Linda E. Johnson](#); author [Andrea Davis Pinkney](#); and [Ezra Jack Keats Foundation](#) Executive Director [Deborah Pope](#). The Foundation supports efforts to foster children's love of reading and creative expression while promoting diversity in children's literature with the [Ezra Jack Keats Book Award](#) for new writers and illustrators.

"Ezra Jack Keats understood that every child can experience the wide-open joy of a playtime adventure. That's what his books have done for me as a reader — they've let me discover over and over again the beauty of boundlessness," said Pinkney. "The Snowy Day stamps are a wonderful way to send Keats greetings. I have my envelopes addressed and waiting, ready to carry messages of unbridled hope."

"Ezra wanted all children to be able to see themselves in picture books," said Pope. "He transformed the landscape of children's literature with the diversity of his characters, and his work was embraced across ethnic and social boundaries. In 1963 he was awarded the prestigious [Caldecott Medal](#) for *The Snowy Day*, a beloved classic that the Library of Congress named [one of 88 books that shaped America](#). It is an honor to Ezra and to the children of this country that the Postal Service is issuing these beautiful Snowy Day stamps. Keats opened the door to diversity in American children's literature and helped generations of Americans grow up with greater tolerance and a broader sense of community."

Art director [Antonio Alcalá](#) of Alexandria, VA, designed the stamps. The stamps may be pre-ordered at this [link](#) for delivery shortly after the Oct. 4 issuance.

The Snowy Day stamps are being issued as Forever stamps which are always equal in value to the current First-Class Mail one-ounce price.

Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks

Customers have 60 days to obtain first-day-of-issue postmarks by mail. They may purchase new stamps at United States Post Office locations, at the Postal Store [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 larger envelopes addressed to:

The Snowy Day Stamps
USPS Stamp Fulfillment Services
8300 NE Underground Drive, Suite 300
Kansas City, MO 64144-9900

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for postmarks up to a quantity of 50. For more than 50, customers are charged

5 cents each. All orders must be postmarked by Dec. 4, 2017.

Ordering First-Day Covers

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamps and 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

Philatelic products for this stamp issue are as follows:

- 676124, Framed Art, \$29.95
- 676134, Stamp Ceremony Memento, \$18.95
- 676166, Notecards, \$15.95
- 676106, Press Sheet with Die-cut, \$78.40.
- 676110, Digital Color Postmark Keepsake (set of 4), \$16.95.
- 676116, First-Day Cover (set of 4), \$3.72.
- 676121, Digital Color Postmark (set of 4), \$6.56.
- 676130, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.

You may view many of this year's other stamps on Facebook at facebook.com/USPSStamps or via Twitter [@USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps).

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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