



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 5, 2018

POSTAL NEWS

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Illinois Statehood Forever Stamp Dedicated Today

SPRINGFIELD, IL — Illinois, our nation's 21st state, will celebrate its bicentennial Dec. 3, 2018. To celebrate this milestone, the U.S. Postal Service dedicated the [Illinois Statehood Forever stamp](#) today at the [Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library](#) in Springfield.

"We are thrilled to honor Illinois as a state that has been instrumental to American ingenuity and the American spirit," said U.S. Postal Service Acting Customer and Marketing Officer and Executive Vice President [Jacqueline Krage Strako](#) in dedicating the stamp. "The truth is: Illinois defies simple definition. It's cosmopolitan and quaint, tough and nurturing — all at the same time. It's a state with broad shoulders, a caring heart and Midwestern grit and values. Illinois is where the heartland calls home."

Joining Krage Strako in the dedication were Illinois Governor [Bruce Rauner](#) (via video), Deputy Governor [Leslie Munger](#), Springfield Mayor James Langfelder, Illinois Bicentennial Commission Co-Chair Randy Dunn and Illinois State Historian Sam Wheeler.

"The U.S. Postal Service has designed a remarkable stamp to commemorate our Bicentennial," said Rauner. "This Statehood Stamp reminds us of the many great contributions Illinois has made to the country and society over the past 200 years. We're grateful to stamp designer and Illinois artist Michael Konetzka for his creativity."

"We thank the United States Postal Service for The Illinois Statehood Stamp, an important and exciting piece of our Bicentennial celebration," said Munger. "This national recognition of our state's 200th birthday is a tribute to Illinois' rich history and makes us all Illinois proud."

News about the new stamp is being shared with the hashtags [#IllinoisStamp](#) and [#IllinoisStatehood](#).

[Antonio Alcalá](#) of Alexandria, VA, was the project's art director.

The stamp art is a graphic illustration featuring an outline of the state map with a series of yellow beams radiating upward like the rays of a rising sun. The colors on the map begin at the bottom with a deep yellow, representing the sun. The color fades upwards to pale yellow and then into pale blue, with increasingly deeper blues rising to the top of the map; the yellows and blues reflect the dawning of a new day as the state joined the Union. At the top of the stamp, 20 stars — 10 on each side of the map — are arranged in triangular patterns, reminiscent of the state's centennial flag. The stars represent the first 20 states in the Union; the rising sun symbolizes the new state's place on the American flag as the 21st star.

Nicknamed the Prairie State, Illinois has a predominantly flat terrain. The southernmost area of the state has a gently sloping landscape, and the rolling hills in the northwestern corner include the state's highest point, Charles Mound, at 1,235 ft. above sea level. Springfield is the state capital.

Chicago, the state's largest city — the third largest in the U.S. — is a cultural and financial center with museums, architecture, music and theater that are internationally renowned. Other Illinois communities boast their own cultural and historic institutions. Oak Park, home of the pioneering architect Frank Lloyd Wright, contains much of his early work.

Other landmarks and historic sites dot the state. The restored village of New Salem, where President Abraham Lincoln lived from 1831 to 1837, the home of President Ulysses S. Grant in Galena, and the Lincoln Home in Springfield are notable historic sites.

The state was the birthplace of some of America's most important cultural figures including Miles Davis, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Jane Addams, Ronald Reagan, Jack Benny, Wild Bill Hickok, Walt Disney, Ernest Hemingway, Lorraine Hansberry, Carl Sandburg and Native American leader Black Hawk.

Tourism is an important part of the Illinois economy. Forest preserves, wildlife areas, museums, historic sites, gardens, architecture tours, professional and amateur sports, theater and much more await visitors. In addition to these attractions, the state is home to a thriving arts and crafts community.

Stamp ideas welcome

The public is encouraged to submit stamp suggestions. Visit the [Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee](#) website for details on the stamp selection process and instructions for submitting suggestions in writing. Due to the time required for research and approval, ideas for stamp subjects should be received at least three years prior to the proposed release. Each submission should include pertinent historical information and important dates associated with the subject.

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 Post Office locations, at the Postal Store usps.com/shop or by calling 800-782-6724. Customers must affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others and place them in larger envelopes addressed to:

FDOI – Illinois Statehood Stamp
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 July 5, 2018.

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 *USA Philatelic* publication and online at usps.com/shop. Customers may register to receive a free *USA Philatelic* publication online at usps.com/philatelic.

Philatelic Products

The following Philatelic products are available at usps.com/shop.

- 477106, Press Sheet with Die-cut, \$60.00.
- 477110, Digital Color Postmark Keepsake, \$11.95.
- 477116, First-Day Cover, \$0.94.
- 477121, Digital Color Postmark, \$1.65.
- 477124, Framed Art, \$39.95
- 477130, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.
- 477133, Panel, \$10.95.

Many of this year's other stamps can be viewed on Facebook at facebook.com/USPSStamps or via Twitter [@USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps). All postage stamps are available for purchase at Post Offices, online at usps.com, and by toll-free phone order at 1-800 STAMP-24.

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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