



POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 5, 2023

National contact: Tatiana Roy
tatiana.l.roy@usps.gov
usps.com/news

Local contact: Steve Doherty
stephen.n.doherty@usps.gov
usps.com/news



USPS Honors Author and Illustrator Tomie dePaola With Forever Stamp

MANCHESTER, NH — The U.S. Postal Service celebrates children’s book author and illustrator Tomie dePaola with the release of a Forever stamp. A dedication ceremony for the stamp was held May 5 at the Currier Museum of Art.

“There are many gifted children’s book authors and illustrators, but Tomie dePaola’s genius is unique in so many ways: He could communicate with — and without — words, and touch readers across cultures and generations,” said Steve Monteith, chief customer and marketing officer, who was the dedicating official for the ceremony. “At the Postal Service, we feel great kinship in this idea. We help Americans of all backgrounds and generations stay connected, no matter where they are.”

Other participants at the ceremony included Bruce McColl, director of engagement at the Currier Museum of Art; Dr. Susan Lynch, former first lady of New Hampshire and Currier Museum of Art board member; Judie dePaola Bobbi, sister of Tomie dePaola; Erin Fehlau, WMUR-TV anchor; Jon Anderson, president and publisher of Simon & Schuster Children’s Publishing; Sarah Mackenzie, founder of Read-Aloud Revival; and Kathleen McCaffery, English language arts consultant at the New Hampshire Department of Education.

DePaola (1934-2020) produced an extraordinarily varied body of work that encompasses folktales and legends, informational books, religious and holiday stories, and autobiographical tales. Deceptively simple, his stories contain layers of emotional meaning that appeal to readers of all ages.

DePaola is probably best known for the “Strega Nona” picture book series. Set in southern Italy, the gently humorous stories focus on Strega Nona, or “Grandma Witch,” who uses magic to help with matters of the heart and to cure her neighbors’ ills. Published in 1975, the first book in the series received a Caldecott Honor as one of the most distinguished picture books published that year.

The “Strega Nona” stories read like well-worn folktales, as do plenty of dePaola’s other works. Some of his books retell legends that have shaped cultures around the world. Other stories are dePaola inventions. Many of his books emphasize family relationships and draw on dePaola’s personal experience. “I’ve discovered,” he once said, “that children most respond to books based on my own life.”

Whatever the subject, dePaola’s illustrations are instantly recognizable. Characterized by bright but muted tones and flat, two-dimensional perspectives, they offer a distinctive mix of Romanesque painting styles and traditional folk art. Objects that meant the most to dePaola — notably hearts and white birds — recur throughout his work.

In all his books, dePaola tried to convey three fundamental truths: Success depends on hard work, happiness relies on embracing one’s true self, and love and kindness underscore all.

In 2011, the American Library Association awarded him the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award (now the Children’s Literature Legacy Award) for his “substantial and lasting contribution to literature for children.”

DePaola died in Lebanon, NH, after complications from surgery following a fall. Following his death, the Currier Museum established the Tomie dePaola Art Education Fund to support art instruction for young people from all backgrounds. Counting more than 100 pieces of art by dePaola in its permanent collection, the museum shares his long-held belief in the power of art to transform a child’s life.

The stamp art features a detail from the cover of “Strega Nona.” Derry Noyes, an art director for USPS, designed the stamp with dePaola’s original art. News of the Tomie dePaola stamp is being shared with the hashtag **#TomiedePaolaStamp**.

Postal Products

Customers may purchase stamps and other philatelic products through the [Postal Store](#) at usps.com/shopstamps, by calling 844-737-7826, by mail through [USA Philatelic](#) or at Post Office locations nationwide.

###

Please Note: The United States Postal Service is an independent federal establishment, mandated to be self-financing and to serve every American community through the affordable, reliable and secure delivery of mail and packages to nearly 165 million addresses six and often seven days a week. Overseen by a bipartisan Board of Governors, the Postal Service is implementing a 10-year transformation plan, [Delivering for America](#), to modernize the postal network, restore long-term financial sustainability, dramatically improve service across all mail and shipping categories, and maintain the organization as one of America’s most valued and trusted brands.

The Postal Service generally receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

For USPS media resources, including broadcast-quality video and audio and photo stills, visit the [USPS Newsroom](#). Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Subscribe to the [USPS YouTube Channel](#) and like us on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Postal Service, visit usps.com and facts.usps.com.