



POSTAL NEWS

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VALENTINE CARDS BEARING 'LOVE-THEMED' POSTMARKS SHOW YOU REALLY CARE

WASHINGTON, DC – Imagine the keepsake you'll create by sending Valentine cards bearing specially designed postmarks from Loveville, MD; Loveland, CO; Romance, AR or Valentine, VA, just to name a few. Receiving a Valentine or letter bearing a postmark from one of a dozen "love themed" post offices across the nation tells your loved-ones and friends that they're really special. The uniquely designed postmark chronicles this timeless keepsake – making it as special as the correspondence itself.

Having your cards and letters postmarked with affection is simple. This special Valentine Postmark re-mailing program allows anyone, anywhere, to obtain a "Love" postmark. Simply enclose pre-stamped, pre-addressed envelopes (envelopes should each have 37-cent postage; postcards, 23-cents) and mail in a large stamped envelope to:

Postmaster
(Town Name) Valentine Re-mailing
City, State ZIP Code

Customers can use a larger envelope and mail their envelopes using Express Mail Service (1-2 day delivery); or Priority Mail Service (2-3 day delivery) to expedite delivery.

Unless otherwise indicated below, out-of-state post offices should receive Valentine cards for postmarking and re-mailing by Monday, February 10. In-state post offices need to receive them by Tuesday, February 11 for delivery by Valentine's Day.

It is important to include a return address and ZIP Code. If you don't know the ZIP Code, don't guess: call 1-800-ASK-USPS or go online to www.usps.com.

Post Offices Offering Unique Valentine Postmarks

Editor's Note: While there are many communities bearing "loved-themed" names, the following is a listing of post offices that are offering unique postmarks this year. Except as noted, media should feel free to contact the local postmaster.

Bliss, NY 14024 -- Postmaster Rosemary Phillippi (585-322-7740), who runs this one-person office says that last year she applied a special pictorial cancellation for Valentine's Day on 1,723 envelopes. Her average daily cancellations are 200. This year she plans on personally applying the unique postmark that depicts multiple Cupid's hearts. The Valentine's postmark is available from February 14 through March 14, 2002 only. The media contact is Mary Quinn, 585-272-5730.

Heart Butte, MT 59448 -- Postmaster Athena Mosxona, (406-338-2399) is offering a pictorial heart in red ink with a ribbon postmark of Heart Butte during the entire month of February. The Heart Butte Post Office receives several hundred Valentine postmark requests per year.

Juliette, GA 31046 -- Delores Molton, Postmaster (478-994-6611). In addition to a Juliette cancellation, thoughtful sweethearts can also have their Valentine's cards canceled in Romeo, MI with a silhouette of Shakespeare's Romeo. Cards must be submitted by February 7 for delivery by Valentine's Day. For additional information, contact Donna Ricks (478) 752-8743.

Loveland, CO 80538 -- Loveland Postal Supervisor Cathy Minter (970-613-0756). Customers can receive a Cupid cachet, love verse and pictorial heart-shaped Loveland postmark. Loveland normally receives an average 35,000 cancellations per day throughout the year, making it the biggest Valentine remailing program in the world. Loveland receives more than 200,000 Valentines annually from every state and more than 100 countries. Senior citizen volunteers do the hand-stamping of the Cupid cachet and love verse. During Valentine pre-mailing period of February 1 -14, in addition to and above the 35,000 cancellations they do daily, Loveland Post Office will handle an additional 20,000 Valentine cancellations per day.

Loveville, MD 20656 -- Postmaster, Eva Hall (301-475-5243), who runs the one-person post office says her daily volume of 1,200 cancellations jumps about six times to 7,200 about a week prior to Valentine's Day. During this time Hall brings in a clerk for the sole purpose of hand-canceling Valentine cards with a unique postmark that depicts Cupid shooting an arrow through a heart. The Cupid postmark is only available between February 1 and 14 each year.

Loving, NM 88256 -- Postmaster, Charlotte Brewer (505-745-3611). Loving's special pictorial postmark, beginning February 1, depicts lovebirds sitting on top of a heart over the inscription "Valentines Day Station." Loving is a small community with a population of 1,400 and is located near Carlsbad Caverns. The number of postmarks prior to Valentine's Day jump to about 4,000 daily as compared to about 500 on an average day.

Romance, AR 72136 -- Postmaster, Nancy Schnebelen (501-556-5911) reports that two of approximately 10 weddings held in the lobby last year were on Valentine's Day. Schnebelen says mail volume increases substantially during the months of April, May and June due to couples wanting the "Romance" cancellation on their wedding invitations. The Romance Post Office postmarks about 400 letters on a given day. Two weeks prior to Valentine's Day that increases three-fold to about 1,300 daily. When necessary, Schnebelen schedules her Postmaster Relief to assist her in hand-canceling each special piece of "romantic" mail. This year's cancellation depicts Cupid with his bow on the left side of "Love Station, Romance, AR 72136" with three hearts of various sizes on the right side.

Romeo, MI 48065 -- Postmaster, Alex Stubbs (810-752-3823). Customers can receive a pictorial postmark illustrating Romeo and Juliette with the Romeo, MI cancellation.

Sugar City, CO 81076 - Postmaster, Rudy Terrones (719-267-3333). Customers can receive a pictorial postmark with the description: "Sugar City - The sweetest town around." The Sugar City Post Office receives several hundred Valentine postmark requests a year.

Valentine, NE 69201 -- Postmaster, Rick Bordeaux (402-376-1540). A special postmark featuring the words "With Love on Valentine's Day" is available February 1-15. The post office postmarks an average of 3,500 pieces of mail each day. That number jumps to 20,000 per day the two weeks prior to Valentine's Day.

Valentine, TX 79854 -- Postmaster Maria Carrasco (915-467-2912) operates the Love Station of Texas. Since 1993, students from grades 7 through 12 compete to see whose artwork will be used on that year's special cancellation stamp. Carrasco, with the help of her Postmaster Replacement will hand- stamp cards and letters from February 1-14. In 1994, a record 39,000 pieces from all over the world received the Valentine postmark. On an average day Carrasco postmarked approximately 100 cards and letters. Two weeks prior to Valentine's Day, that number increases to 1,000 to 2,000 daily.

Valentines, VA 23887 -- Postmaster Denise Evans (434-577-2456), who runs the one-person post office says her daily volume of 100 cancellations jumps about 400 times to 40,000 two weeks prior to Valentine's Day. During this time, Evans brings in her Postmaster Relief for the sole purpose of hand canceling Valentine cards with a unique postmark that depicts a red heart with several dogwood flowers (The Virginia State flower) inside the heart. The red heart postmark is only available mid-January through Feb. 14 each year.