

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Contact: Media Relations  
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**NAVAJO JEWELRY STAMP TO SHOWCASE ARTISTRY  
OF NAVAJO SILVERSMITHS**

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Postal Service will issue a new two-cent Navajo Jewelry definitive stamp as part of its American Design series on August 20, at the Americover Stamp Show in Indianapolis, IN. The stamp features a painted detail of a Navajo silver and turquoise necklace with sand-cast "squash blossoms." The 11 a.m. (Central Time) first-day-of-issue dedication ceremony is free and open to the public.

"The Postal Service is proud to highlight the talents of Navajo silversmiths with the latest edition of our highly regarded American design series of postage stamps," said U.S. Postal Service Executive Director of Stamp Services David Failor. "The Navajo learned to work silver from traveling Mexican plateros, or silversmiths, in the mid-19th century and soon turned the craft of jewelry making into a fine art."

The stamp features artist Lou Nolan's painted detail of a Navajo silver and turquoise necklace with sand-cast squash blossoms set with polished blue turquoise nuggets. Nolan based his painting on a photograph by Peter T. Furst. The necklace itself belongs to a private collector and is believed to have been made sometime during the 1940s or 1950s.

In sand-casting, a design is carved into two pieces of soft rock that, when fitted together, acts as a mold into which melted silver is poured. After the silver is removed, it is filed and polished. To see the Navajo Jewelry stamp and other images from the 2004 Stamp Program, visit the Postal Store at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop) and click on "Release Schedule" in the Collector's Corner.

Current U.S. stamps and stationery, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available by toll-free telephone order at 1-800-STAMP-24. A wide selection of stamps and other philatelic items also are available at the Postal Store at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop), and



[www.postalartgallery.com](http://www.postalartgallery.com) offers beautifully framed prints of original stamp art for delivery straight to the home or office.

Definitives are regular issues of postage stamps, usually sold over long periods of time. With the issuance of the five-cent American Toleware stamp in 2002, the Postal Service launched a new series of definitive stamps featuring examples of the rich diversity of American design.

The American Design series showcases objects from various regions, eras and ethnic cultures that combine utility with beauty and function with form. It replaced the long-running Transportation series, which was issued from 1981 through 1995. The American Design stamps will range in denomination from one through ten cents: the ten-cent American Clock and the one-cent Tiffany Lamp were issued in 2003; the four-cent Chippendale Chair was issued in March 2004.

Lou Nolan has been the artist for many Postal Service projects. Among them are five stamps in the Transportation series (School Bus, Dog Sled, Milk Wagon, Popcorn Wagon and Elevator); the Certified Public Accountants stamp (1987); the Bill of Rights stamp (1989); and the first four stamps in the American Design series (American Toleware, American Clock, Tiffany Lamp and Chippendale Chair).

Well before the turn of the 20th century, jewelry making had become, along with the older tradition of weaving, an important aspect of Navajo material culture. Early Navajo silversmiths were especially known for their bracelets, concha belts and necklaces. The squash blossom necklace, in particular, became and remains very popular in the Southwest. Artistic expression continues to flourish among Navajo silversmiths today. They use silver, gold, and a variety of semi-precious and precious stones to create traditional and contemporary designs.

A squash blossom necklace is typically composed of silver beads resembling stylized blossoms, with a single crescent-shaped pendant at the center. Some squash blossom necklaces are made entirely of silver, particularly older examples; others combine silver and turquoise or silver and coral. The squash blossom design is based on a Spanish-Mexican trouser ornament that was actually a stylized version of the pomegranate blossom. The Navajo name for this type of necklace – squash blossom – has nothing to do with either squash or pomegranate blossoms. It simply means "round beads that spread out."

The Navajo word for the central crescent-shaped pendant is "názah," meaning "curve," but such pendants are usually referred to simply as "najas." Initially, the crescent-shaped naja pendants were probably based on Spanish colonial bridle ornaments, which, in turn, were derived from a Moorish crescent design.

Around 1880, Navajo silversmiths began setting stones – particularly large, rough-cut nuggets of turquoise – into silver. Turquoise was, and still is today, highly regarded and appreciated in the Southwest. To many Southwest tribes, turquoise is a sacred stone. The Navajo, who use it lavishly in their jewelry, believe that wearing turquoise brings good fortune.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail.

An independent federal agency, the Postal Service makes deliveries to about 141 million addresses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$68 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. Moreover, today's postage rates will remain stable until at least 2006. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume -- some 202 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year – and serves seven million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.

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## TECHNICAL DETAILS

Issue: Navajo Jewelry  
Item Number: 107200  
Denomination & Type of Issue: 2-cent definitive  
Format: Pane of 20 (1 design)  
Series: American Design  
Issue Date & City: August 20, 2004, Indianapolis, IN, 46206  
Designer: Derry Noyes, Washington, DC  
Art Director: Derry Noyes, Washington, DC  
Typographer: Derry Noyes, Washington, DC  
Illustrator: Lou Nolan, McLean, VA  
Engraver: Keating Gravure  
Modeler: Avery Dennison, SPD  
Manufacturing Process: Gravure  
Printer: Avery Dennison (AVR)  
Printed at: AVR, Clinton, SC  
Press Type: Dia Nippon Kiko (DNK)  
Stamps per Pane: 20  
Print Quantity: 100 million stamps  
Paper Type: Nonphosphored, Type III  
Adhesive Type: Pressure-sensitive  
Processed at: AVR, Clinton, SC  
Colors: Yellow, Cyan, Magenta, Black, PMS 309 (Green)  
Stamp Orientation: Vertical  
Image Area (w x h): 0.730 x 0.840 in./18.542 x 21.336 mm  
Overall Size (w x h): 0.870 x 0.980 in./22.098 x 24.943 mm  
Full Pane Size (w x h): 5.250 x 4.921 in./133.35 x 124.9934 mm  
Plate Size: 280 stamps per revolution  
Plate Numbers: "V" followed by five (5) single digits  
Marginal Markings: "2004 USPS" • Price • Plate position diagram  
Plate numbers (4 per pane) • 4 Barcodes on back  
Catalog Item Number(s): 107220 Block of 4 — \$0.08  
107230 Block of 10 — \$0.20

107240 Full Pane of 20 — \$0.40  
107262 First Day Cover — \$0.77

#### How to Order First Day of Issue Postmark

Customers have 30 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at their local Post Office™, by telephone at 1-800-STAMP-24, and at the Postal Store Web site at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes (to themselves or others), and place them in a larger envelope addressed to:

NAVAJO JEWELRY DEFINITIVE STAMP  
POSTMASTER  
125 W SOUTH ST  
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46206-9998

After applying the first day of issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by September 19, 2004. How to Order First Day Covers Stamp Fulfillment Services also offers first day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service 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. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 1-800-STAMP-24 or writing to:

INFORMATION FULFILLMENT  
DEPT 6270  
US POSTAL SERVICE  
PO BOX 219014  
KANSAS CITY MO 64121-9014

#### Philatelic Products

There are no philatelic products for this stamp issue.