

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**REVOLUTIONARY FIRST DAY DIGITAL COLOR POSTMARK
CREATES UNIQUE COLLECTABLE**

WASHINGTON – Stamp collecting will take on new color January 6 when the U.S. Postal Service introduces a First-Day Digital Color Postmark product with the issuance of the Lunar New Year Souvenir Stamp Sheet.

“This new product will do for traditional black and white first-day postmarks as color television has done for black and white TV,” explained David Failor, Executive Director, Stamp Services, “by adding vibrant color, clarity and definition previously unattainable.”

The First-Day Digital Color Postmark is an official digital postmark bearing the first-day-of-issuance-date containing an image that relates to the stamp design with the words “FIRST DAY OF ISSUE.”

The First Day Digital Color Postmarks will be available for purchase with specific 2005 stamp issues (noted below).

These unique collectables are designed by the artist, or art director, who designed the stamp.

Stamp artist Clarence Lee designed both the Lunar New Year Souvenir Sheet and the First Day Digital Color Postmark. The Lunar New Year Souvenir Sheet First Day of Issue Ceremony is scheduled at 11 a.m. Hawaiian Standard Time (5 p.m. Eastern Time), January 6, 2005, in the Coral Ballroom at the Hilton Hawaiian Village,



This sample First Day Digital Color Postmark featuring a 2003 Reptiles and Amphibians stamp was created for illustrative purposes only.

2005 Kalia Road, Honolulu, HI 96825-1917. A limited number of First Day Digital Color Postmarked envelopes will be available on-site.

First Day Digital Color Postmarks are available for \$1.50 per cover, providing enhanced visual appeal over the traditional metal and rubber die cancels. *NOTE:* First Day Digital Color Postmarks are not available for customer-submitted covers.

While not available at Post Offices, the First-Day Digital Color Postmark may be ordered online at The Postal Store, www.usps.com/shop, through the USA Philatelic catalog, by telephone at 1-800-STAMP 24 or via fax at 816-545-1212.

2005 Stamp Issues offering First Day Digital Color Postmarks:

- Lunar New Year Souvenir Sheet
- Arthur Ashe
- Jim Henson & Muppets
- The Art of Disney: Celebrations
- Spring Flowers
- To Form a More Perfect Union
- Henry Fonda
- Rio Grande Blankets
- Masterworks of Architecture
- Greta Garbo
- Constellations
- Advances in Aviation
- Latino Dance
- Holiday Cookies
- Love Bouquet
- Sporty Cars of the 50s

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 more than 142 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 \$69 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 206 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.