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**Love Bouquet Stamp Issued at the American Philatelic Society Stamp Show 2005**  
**Love is Everywhere**

ATLANTA, GA – A hand extending a bouquet of colorful spring flowers, symbolic of warmth, hope and love made hearts flutter today when the U.S. Postal Service issued the Love Bouquet stamp.

The 37-cent Love stamp was dedicated at a first-day-of-issue ceremony during the American Philatelic Society's AmeriStamp Expo 2005 in Atlanta. One-and-a-half billion of these stamps were printed in self-adhesive convertible booklets of 20. The stamps are available today only at Atlanta Post Offices. They go on sale at Post Offices nationwide beginning tomorrow, Feb. 19.

Love Bouquet First-Day-Covers, Digital Color Postmark Covers and Cancellation Keepsake will also be available nationwide.

"Love stamps are traditionally some of the most beautiful and anticipated stamps in the Postal Service's stamp program," said Anderson Hodges, Jr., Atlanta District Manager, U.S. Postal Service, who served as the dedicating official.

"Since 1973, stamps depicting swans, Victorian lace and modern art have graced birth announcements, wedding invitations, Mother's Day cards, and other greetings of affection across the country and around the world. Whatever the design, from the moment they are spotted on the outside of an envelope, these miniature works of art bring good news," he added.

Joining Hodges at the ceremony were Janet Klug, President, American Philatelic Society, and Marjorie M. Brown, Atlanta Postmaster. Among the honored guests were: Ken Martin, Convention Chairperson, American Philatelic Society; David Failor, Executive Director, Stamp Services, for the U.S. Postal Service; Chris Calle, Stamp Designer; and students from L.O. Kimberly Elementary School and John Hope Elementary School, both in Atlanta.



The Postal Service issued the first stamp in the Love series in 1973. Over the years, creative, new ways of saying “love” have appeared on American postage stamps. For this year’s Love stamp, Artist Vivienne Flesher used chalk pastels to create a design on a cheery yellow-gold background showing a hand offering a bouquet of colorful spring flowers. Derry Noyes was the art director.

To highlight this artwork as a collectable, the Postal Service is offering First-Day Digital color postmarks designed by Noyes for just \$1.50. The First-Day Digital color postmark has the first-day-of-issuance date containing an image that relates to the stamp design with the words “FIRST DAY OF ISSUE.” *Note:* First Day Digital color postmarks are not available on customer-submitted covers.

To see the 2005 Love stamp and other designs, go to the Postal Service’s online 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, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available by toll-free phone order at 1-800-STAMP-24. A selection of stamps and other philatelic items are also available at the online Postal Store at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). In addition, beautifully custom-framed prints of original stamp art are available at [www.postalartgallery.com](http://www.postalartgallery.com).

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.

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