

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**U.S. POSTAL SERVICE HITS THE SLOPES WITH POSTAGE STAMP  
HONORING THE XXth OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES**

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO.— Honoring the spirit of athleticism and international unity, the U.S. Postal Service issued a new postage stamp today, inspired by the Olympic Winter Games, featuring an illustration of a downhill skier on a slalom course. The 2006 Olympic Winter Games stamp was dedicated at the U.S. Olympic Complex in Colorado Springs, Colo., and coincides with the XXth Olympic Winter Games, which will be held February 10-26, 2006 in Torino, Italy. The 39-cent stamp, available only in Colorado Springs today, will be available nationwide tomorrow, Jan. 12.



“Long after the Olympic flame is extinguished, this stamp will keep the spirit of the Olympic Winter Games burning in our hearts,” said Dean Granholm, Manager, Colorado/Wyoming District for the U.S. Postal Service. “It’s a tribute to the unifying Olympic spirit and ideal of excellence.”

Joining Granholm at the ceremony, from the United States Olympic Committee, were Chip Gregson, Chief Operating Officer; John Register, Manager, Paralympic Academy and Military Programs; Jeff Howard, Director Media and Public Relations. Three-time Olympian Caroline Hallisey also participated. Postal Service spokesperson, Vonzell Solomon, a former postal carrier and “American Idol” finalist, was also part of today’s ceremony.

“While the Olympic Winter Games happen every four years, ski and Olympic enthusiasts alike can enjoy the 2006 Games on beautiful stamps and commemorate the history of the competition,” said Granholm.

Prompted by a growing group of snow-sport enthusiasts, the first Olympic Winter Games—initially called International Sports Week—were held at a small Alpine resort in Chamonix, France, in 1924. Figure skating, which first debuted at the Olympic Games in 1908 in London, can be performed on an indoor rink during summer, but other winter sports, such as bobsledding and skiing, required outdoor venues. The 1924 event attracted more than 250 athletes from 16 countries, spurring the International

Olympic Committee (IOC) to agree to stage Olympic Winter Games separately from summer competitions.

In 2006, the Olympic Winter Games will include curling, bobsled, figure skating, ice hockey, luge, skeleton, speedskating, skiing and snowboarding. Some 2,500 world-class athletes—a word derived from the Greek word for “prize-seekers”—will compete amid snow and ice in front of an estimated 1.5 million spectators. This will be the second time Italy will host the Olympic Winter Games, as it hosted the VII Olympic Winter Games in Cortina d'Ampezzo in 1956, and the third time overall, as Italy also staged the Games of the XVII Olympiad in Rome in 1960. Most recently, the 2002 Olympic Winter Games were held in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Stamps featuring Olympic themes have been popular with collectors since the first modern Olympiad in 1896, when Greece issued 12 Olympic-themed commemorative stamps. This year's 2006 Olympic Winter Games stamp, created by illustrator John Mattos of San Francisco, Calif., features a skier cutting into a turn at full speed.

Beginning in 1932, numerous U.S. stamps have honored the Olympic Games including the 2004 Olympic Games \* Athens, Greece stamp issued to coincide with the games of the XXVIII Olympiad, which were held in that city.

Current U.S. stamps, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available by toll-free phone order at 1-800-STAMP-24. A wide selection of stamps and other philatelic items is also available at the Postal Store at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). Beautifully framed prints of original stamp art for delivery straight to the home or office are available at [www.postalartgallery.com](http://www.postalartgallery.com).

### **How to Order the 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-STAMP24, 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:

2006 OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES  
POSTMASTER  
201 EAST PIKES PEAK AVENUE  
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80903-9998

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 February 11, 2006.

### **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

Since 1775, the Postal Service and its predecessor, the Post Office Department, has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 144 million homes and businesses every day, six days a week and is the only service provider delivering 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 \$69 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The Postal Service delivers more than half of the world's mail volume — some 212 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year — and serves seven and a half million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide. Its website, [usps.com](http://usps.com), attracts more than 21 million visitors each month.