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**NATIVE AMERICAN ART SHOWCASED ON
NEW U.S. POSTAGE STAMPS AND POSTAL CARDS**

WASHINGTON – Ten pieces of Native American art were highlighted by the U.S. Postal Service at a first-day-of-issue ceremony held today in Santa Fe, NM. Ten 37-cent commemorative postage stamps and a booklet of twenty 23-cent stamped postal cards were issued at 11 a.m. (Mountain Time) on the Plaza Stage during the annual Santa Fe Indian Market, sponsored by the Southwestern Association for Indian Arts (SWAIA).

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“The Art of the American Indian stamps illustrate the talent, ingenuity and artistic skills of a variety of Native American communities across the centuries,” said Anita Bizzotto, Chief Marketing Officer and Senior Vice President, U.S. Postal Service, who dedicated the stamps. “Now, people will have the opportunity to see Native American originality as these stamps travel quickly, easily and affordably on letters and packages to every house in America.”

Also participating in the ceremony was U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman, New Mexico; Mayor Larry Delgado, City of Santa Fe, NM; Dick Sheaf, designer, art director and typographer for the Art of the American Indian stamps; Jai Lakshman, Executive Director, SWAIA; and Ruben Romero, Santa Fe, NM Postmaster, U.S. Postal Service. The Navajo Code Talkers’ Association Honor Guard conducted the presentation of colors, while Karmela Gonzales, City Letter Carrier, Santa Fe Post Office, U.S. Postal Service, sang the National Anthem.

Dr. Steven LeBlanc, Director of Collections, Peabody Museum, Harvard University, was recognized for having led the original expedition that resulted in the discovery of the Mimbres bowl used as one of the designs for the Art of the American Indian stamps.

Honored guests included Mrs. Delores Lewis Garcia and Mrs. Emma Lewis Mitchell and families, daughters of the late Lucy Martin Lewis, master potter and designer of the Acoma pot, used for another of the stamp designs.

Relatives of the late Daisy Taugelchee listed on the program as honored guests were unable to attend, but her sister-in-law Virginia Deal and Mark Winter, owner of the historic Toadalena Trading Post, where the Taugelchee family lives, were recognized. Daisy Taugelchee is a widely-known creator of finely woven Navajo textiles, and created the Navajo weaving used in the Art of the American Indian stamps. The Yellow Bird Indian Dancers performed a Hoop Dance, and prior to the end of the ceremony the National Anthem was sung again—in Navajo—by Nonabah Sam.

The pane of 10 jumbo, self-adhesive stamps feature photographs of American Indian artifacts dating from around the 11th century A.D. to circa 1969. John Stevens, a calligrapher in Winston-Salem, NC, designed and created the lettering in the title. Descriptive text on the back of the stamps includes an overview and specific information about each of the objects.



The following artifacts are depicted on the Art of the American Indian stamps: a Mimbres bowl, a Kutenai parfleche, two Tlingit sculptures, a detail from a Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) bag, a Miccosukee-Seminole doll, a Mississippian effigy, an Acoma pot made by Lucy Martin Lewis, a Navajo weaving by Daisy Taugelchee, a detail of a Seneca ladle, and a Luiseño basket.

Some American Indian artists today still create traditional forms; others are expanding their artistic endeavors in new directions in the fields of painting, sculpture, photography, printmaking, video and performance art.

To see the Art of the American Indian stamps and other images from the 2004 Commemorative Stamp Program, visit the Postal Store at 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 are also available at the Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop. And www.postalartgallery.com offers beautifully framed prints of original stamp art for delivery straight to the home or office.

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.