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**HANUKKAH POSTAGE STAMP ISSUED TODAY BY U.S. POSTAL SERVICE**

NEW YORK — A new 37-cent Hanukkah stamp was issued today by the U.S. Postal Service at the Postage Stamp Mega Show in New York City. Art director Ethel Kessler combined two elements in the design of the stamp: the type in the background spelling out Hanukkah, designed by Greg Berger, and a photograph of a dreidel (a four-sided top), made by Elise Moore. The dreidel is from the collection of Rabbi Lennard and Dr. Linda Thal, who purchased it in Jerusalem.



The 2004 Hanukkah stamp is available at the show and New York City Post Offices today and will be available at Post Offices nationwide beginning tomorrow.

“This stamp represents the season, offering a unique moment on the doorstep for our friends, families and customers, who eagerly look forward to the delivery of their holiday cards and letters,” said S. David Fineman, Chairman of the presidentially appointed Postal Service Board of Governors, who dedicated the Hanukkah stamp.

Joining Fineman at the ceremony were Elizabeth Pope, President, American Stamp Dealers Association, Inc. (ASDA); Rabbi Morton Howard Pomerantz, Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, who served as Master of Ceremonies; and Daniel Hadar, Intellectual Property Attorney, U.S. Postal Service.

Hanukkah is a joyous yearly festival spanning eight days and nights that is celebrated by Jews around the world. The holiday commemorates the successful Jewish revolt led by Judah Maccabee against the oppressive government of Antiochus IV in 165 B.C.

Hanukkah is the Hebrew word for “dedication.” Tradition relates how a miracle took place during the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem, which had been desecrated: The remaining supply of sacramental oil, thought to be enough for only one day, burned for eight.

The eight days and nights of Hanukkah begin on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev in the Hebrew calendar (in November or December). Today, family members gather each night during the festival to light candles on a special candleholder called a menorah.

Other Hanukkah traditions include singing, the exchange of gifts and the spinning of the dreidel. Dreidels commonly bear a Hebrew letter on each side, the first letters of a phrase meaning, “a great miracle happened there.” Children typically use chocolate gelt (coins) to make a bet on the outcome of each spin of the dreidel.

To see the Hanukkah stamp, visit the Postal Service Web site and open this press release at [www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm](http://www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm).

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