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Star Wars Stamps Bring the Force to Post Offices Good Triumphs Over Evil, Favorite Character Announced

HOLLYWOOD, Calif. — The stamp character you picked, the power and wisdom of the mail reflects.

As the highly anticipated *Star Wars* stamps — 15 images from the movie — went on sale today at Post Offices nationwide, the U.S. Postal Service announced Yoda as the top pick of Americans who voted to determine which *Star Wars* character would be featured on a single stamp to be issued later this summer.

The *Star Wars* stamps were dedicated at *Star Wars* Celebration IV — the biggest *Star Wars* event in the galaxy — at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The event, where the Postal Service is the exclusive shipper, coincides with the 30th anniversary of *Star Wars*, produced by Lucasfilm Ltd. In recent weeks, the Postal Service transformed collection boxes across the country into R2-D2 look-alikes and encouraged customers to log on to usps.com to vote for the *Star Wars* character they wanted to see featured on a single stamp.

“We can only describe the excitement created by the *Star Wars* stamps as ‘out of this galaxy,’” said Anita Bizzotto, chief marketing officer of the Postal Service. Joining Bizzotto was Steve Sansweet, director of content management and head of fan relations, Lucasfilm Ltd; Howard

Roffman, president of Lucas Licensing, and sweepstakes winner Jeffrey Adam Walker of Jacksonville, NC. As winner of the Jedi Shipping and Mailing Master Sweepstakes, Walker won a trip to *Star Wars* Celebration IV to see the stamp dedication ceremony.

The *Star Wars* stamp sheet is available for purchase in Post Offices, on usps.com, and by calling 1-800-STAMP-24.

Press note: Broadcast television and radio, print media and Internet news sites can download press materials; including *PATHFIRE*™ broadcast quality video, high resolution still photo images, high resolution stamp images and web media files at www.usps.com/communications/newsroom. Select the icon for Broadcast TV and Multimedia.

A Brief History of the *Star Wars* Saga

On Wednesday, May 25, 1977, audiences got their first look at *Star Wars* at 32 theaters in the United States. Written and directed by George Lucas, it quickly became an international phenomenon, making the phrase “May the Force be with you” and characters such as Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader a part of American culture. A deceptively simple morality tale of good versus evil set across a fantastic galaxy of exotic planets and bizarre creatures, the box office sensation earned seven Academy Awards. The story of Luke Skywalker and a band of rebels battling Darth Vader and the forces of the Galactic Empire (which later added “Episode IV *A New Hope*” to its title) continued in *Star Wars: Episode V The Empire Strikes Back*, released in May 1980, and *Star Wars: Episode VI Return of the Jedi*, released in May 1983.

In May 1999, *Star Wars* returned after a 16-year absence with the release of *Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace*. A box office smash, it was also the first of a new trilogy of *Star Wars* episodes that charted the origins of Darth Vader. *Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones*, the first major live-action movie to be shot entirely digitally, was released in 2002, and the climactic *Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith* was released in 2005. Completing the sprawling *Star Wars* saga, the most recent movies have attracted a new generation of fans to the vast universe created by George Lucas.

Stamp Sheet Design

The commemorative stamps feature images from all six movies in the *Star Wars* saga: Luke Skywalker; Han Solo and Chewbacca; Princess Leia Organa with R2-D2; C-3PO; Yoda; Queen Padmé Amidala; Obi-Wan Kenobi as seen in Episodes IV through VI; Anakin Skywalker battling Obi-Wan Kenobi; Darth Vader; Emperor Palpatine; Darth Maul; Imperial Stormtroopers; Boba Fett; the *Millennium Falcon*; and an X-wing fighter.

The design of the sheet of 15 stamps includes the *Star Wars* logo and background images of a space battle, including a Star Destroyer, TIE fighters, X-wing fighters, and the second Death Star

under construction, as seen in *Return of the Jedi*. The background also includes the lightsaber-wielding form of Darth Vader, whose helmet comprises the largest of the 15 stamps. The back of the stamp sheet includes extensive text describing the dramatic roles that each featured character or vehicle plays in the *Star Wars* saga.

The individual stamps were created and painted by Drew Struzan, who also created posters for all six *Star Wars* movies. The overall design of the pane was finalized by Terry McCaffrey and Bill Gicker of the U.S. Postal Stamp Development team.

Stamp Collecting Products:

There are eight stamp products available for this stamp issue:

- Item 570162, First-Day Cover Full Pane Black Cancellation, \$8.65.
- Item 570163, First-Day Cover (set of 15 Black Cancellations), \$11.85.
- Item 570164, Full Pane Black Cancellation, \$8.65.
- Item 570168, Digital Color Postmark, (set of 15), \$22.50.
- Item 570184, Uncut Press Sheets (3 panes of 15), \$18.45.
- Item 570191, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.
- Item 570199, Cancellation Keepsake (pane w/15 Digital Color Postmark Set), \$28.65.
- Item 886500, Stamped Postal Card Booklet of 15, \$12.95.

How to Order the First-Day-of-Issue Postmark

Customers have 60 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-STAMP-24, or at the Postal Store website at 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:

STAR WARS COMMEMORATIVE SHEET
POSTMASTER
7001 S. CENTRAL AVE
LOS ANGELES CA 90052-9998

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 July 24, 2007.

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

An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that visits 146 million homes and businesses, six days a week. It has 37,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products, and services to cover its operating expenses. The Postal Service has annual revenues of \$73 billion and delivers nearly half the world's mail.

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