

Jim Cochrane  
The Simpsons FDOI  
Building 103 Courtyard (in front of Moe's Café)  
10201 West Pico Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90035  
Thursday, May 7, 2009

---

Thank you, Kelsey.

The odds of being honored on U.S. postage stamps are extremely rare. Individuals can't be commemorated until at least five years after their death, with the exception deceased U.S. Presidents.

Although other icons of television have been immortalized on stamps, only two other programs achieved this honor while still airing original programming: *Sesame Street* and *Monday Night Football*.

The Postal Service is proud to commemorate Homer, Bart, Marge, Lisa and Maggie as the *Simpsons* enters its 20th year as a regularly scheduled half-hour series, making it the longest-running comedy in the history of American prime-time television.

In all that time, no one has revealed what state Springfield is in. Everyone knows there are twenty-five Springfield's in the US and, that "Bill and Marty" come over the airwaves of KBBL meaning their Springfield is in the Western half.

However, we deliver to every household and business –144 million doors every day. We DO know where every city and town is located including all of the Springfields ..... the good news is, we are the most trusted government agency for the last five years....so we can keep a secret. However in 20 years there has never been a letter carrier delivering mail to the Simpson family. What's the odds on that happening? You would have thought there would have been at least one collision between the mailman and Bart on his skateboard. So I have a deal for you. You arrange to have Santa's Little Helper affectionately welcome the mailman; and Matt, the location of the Simpson's hometown is safe forever with us.

The Postal Service, with over 600k employees represents a cross-sectional view of society, but Matt Groening (*pronounced Grayning*) has managed to roll that cross-section into one family --- a complicated one, certainly a little irreverent, but never the less one with a strong family bond. And what a neighborhood of supporting characters. Who doesn't know someone like Mr. Burns working in their office? I personally relate to Very Tall Man. (*Hold up picture*)

Homer is my favorite Simpson, and even though the voting on usps.com doesn't end until May 14<sup>th</sup>, he seems to be everyone's favorite. I think it's because Homer doesn't have any sense of guilt – mostly because he isn't smart enough to. He is smart enough to realize his better half—Marge – is a lot smarter, and the glue that keeps them so close.

Bart's obviously the source of most of the mischief and mayhem for the Simpsons. What little boy isn't? Phone pranks? Throwing snowballs at cars,

skateboarding behind cars. I personally admit to most of those behaviors myself as a youth, and certainly witnessed it in my sons as anyone who has raised boys would agree; however I do wish my son Justin had realized skateboarding – while holding onto a car going 30 miles an hour, was not a good idea....it would have spared him some ankle surgery.

But it was that spirit of adventure that Bart and his sisters, Lisa and Maggie exhibited which made them so appealing to children all over the US, but not always to their parents. We want to appeal to that younger generation to develop an interest in Stamp collecting, by creating stamps they can relate to.

(Pause)

Matt Groening has an ability to observe his life and those of his neighbors and bring it together in a cheeky yet hilarious way. We would like to wholeheartedly thank Matt for providing the original artwork

for these U.S. Stamps.

Over the past three years, our Postal Service team has been working closely with Matt and a lot of other wonderful people to make these stamps a reality.

I'd like to recognize the exceptional partnership that has formed between us and the Fox Licensing group. We also appreciate the support received from Gracie Films and their one-of-a-kind leader, James L. Brooks.

I'd now like to introduce some special guests. Please welcome the Postmaster of Los Angeles, Mark Anderson. He and his team have helped with the "behind the scenes" work to make today special.

Also, please welcome Senior Plant Manager for Los Angeles, Daryl West. Daryl and his team make sure all of your cards, letters and packages get to their destinations on time in and in great shape.

David Failor is with us today. He's the Executive Director of Stamp Services in Washington and has been working closely with the Fox team for the past several years to make today's *Simpsons* stamps a reality.

Finally, I'd like to introduce three very special members of our Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee.

Jean Picker Firstenberg is the current Chair of the Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee. She's the President Emerita of the American Film Institute, and does an exceptional job of leading our Committee.

Also joining us is Jessica Helfand, a partner in the Winterhouse design studio located in the Berkshires. She's the Chair of Design sub-committee.

And finally, we have Michael Brock, who recently retired after 15 years as the Vice Chair of the

Committee and Chair of our Design sub-committee. He's the principle of Michael Brock Design located here in Los Angeles.

All three of these individuals had a strong hand in making these *Simpsons* stamps a reality. They are part of a group of 15 volunteers who review the 50,000 proposals submitted each year for stamp ideas. They do a wonderful job of selecting about 20 subjects, helping us develop a stamp program every year that's relevant, educational, historical, serious, artistic, and on occasions such as today, a whole lot of fun.

At this time, I'd like to invite Matt Groening, James Brooks, and Kelsey Grammar to join me.

Now let's unveil the faces of your five favorite yellow people – now and forevermore commemorated on stamps by the U.S. Postal Service!

(Simpsons' characters emerge from Moe's side entrance. USC Trojan Marching Band performs The Simpsons Theme Song)

- Groening tells the story of how the Simpsons stamps came to be and members of his family the characters were named after.
- Groening and voice of Simpsons characters autograph enlarged stamp images as part of photo op.
- USPS also announces the winners of the 25 random voters. This info can be advanced to FOX affiliates for a local news hook.
- Media provided b-roll of stamp printing and b-roll of Matt Groening telling the story of his life and how the Simpsons came to be.
- FDOI News release, with USPS/Groening/FOX quotes moves at the beginning of the stamp dedication ceremony. Release to have link to b-roll from USPS/Pathfire site.