

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 17, 2002

Contact: Frances Frazier (202) 268-2898  
Stamp News Release #02-084  
Email:mfrazier@email.usps.gov

**CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR COMMEMORATED BY  
U.S. POSTAL SERVICE**

**Year of the Ram to be Honored on U.S. Postage Stamp**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – People around the world will celebrate the Lunar New Year beginning Feb. 1, 2003. According to the Chinese lunar calendar, the Year of the Ram begins on that date and ends on Jan. 21, 2004.

On Jan. 15, the U.S. Postal Service will mark this occasion with the issuance of the 11th stamp in the award-winning Lunar New Year series. The first day of issue ceremony will take place at 11 a.m. at the John C. Haines Elementary School, 247 W. 23rd Place, Chicago, Ill. The series began in 1993 with the issuance of the Year of the Rooster stamp, followed by stamps for Year of the Dog, Boar, Rat, Ox, Tiger, Hare, Dragon, Snake and Horse.

"Employees of the Postal Service are proud to issue the new Lunar New Year stamp. One common theme resonates and takes center stage for all Asian New Year celebrations...and that's family," said David Failor, Executive Director, Stamp Services, U.S. Postal Service. "Since 1993, the Postal Service has honored these Lunar New Year family celebrations with stamps that reflect a portion of our country's rich, multi-cultural heritage. Happy New Year!"

Charm, creativity and a caring and gentle personality are hallmarks of the ram, the eighth of twelve animals associated with the Chinese lunar calendar. People born in the Year of the Ram are said to be fond of nature and they are often happiest in a tranquil and secure environment.



Observed by people of Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tibetan and Mongolian heritage, the traditional Chinese New Year marks the beginning of a new season. Also called Spring Festival, it is a time of renewed hope for a prosperous future and is often celebrated by reunions with family and friends.

To commemorate the Year of the Ram, artist Clarence Lee created an intricate paper-cut design of a ram. The Chinese characters—drawn in grass-style calligraphy by Lau Bun—translate into English as “Year of the Ram.” The greeting “Happy New Year!” is in English.

Clarence Lee, an American of Chinese descent, was born in Honolulu, Hawaii. After attending Pomona College in Claremont, Calif., Lee transferred to the School of Art and Architecture at Yale, receiving a bachelor of fine arts degree in 1958. He worked as a designer in New York before returning to Hawaii in 1966 to open his own design firm.

To see the Year of the Ram stamp, visit the Postal Service Web site at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) and locate the online version of this press release by clicking on “News and Events,” then “Philatelic News.”

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

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 137 million homes and businesses 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 \$65 billion, it is the world’s leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world’s mail volume—some 207 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves 7 million customers each day at its 40,000 retail locations nationwide.

# # #

## TECHNICAL DETAILS

Issue: *Lunar New Year - Ram*  
Item Number: 453700  
Denomination & Type of Issue: 37-cent Commemorative  
Format: Pane of 20 (1 design)  
Series: *Lunar New Year*  
Issue Date & City: January 15 ,2003, Chicago, IL 60607  
Designer: Clarence Lee, Honolulu, HI  
Engraver: N/A  
Artist: Clarence Lee, Honolulu, HI  
Art Director: Terry McCaffrey, USPS  
Typographer: Clarence Lee, Honolulu, HI  
Modeler: Banknote Corporation of America, Inc. (BCA)  
Manufacturing Process: Offset/Microprint "USPS"  
Printer: Banknote Corporation of America, Inc. (BCA)  
Printed at: Browns Summit, NC  
Press Type: Man Roland, 300  
Stamps per Pane: 20  
Print Quantity: 70 million stamps  
Paper Type: Phosphor Tagged, Block  
Gum Type: Pressure Sensitive  
Processed at: Banknote Corporation of America, Inc. (BCA)  
Colors: Yellow, Cyan, Magenta, PMS Blue  
Stamp Orientation: Horizontal  
Image Area (w x h): 1.39 x 0.82 in./35.31 x 20.83 mm  
Overall Size (w x h): 1.56 x 0.99 in./39.62 x 25.15 mm  
Full Pane Size (w x h): 7.26 x 5.90 in./184.40 x 149.86 mm  
Plate Size: 240 stamps per revolution  
Plate Numbers: "B" followed by four (4) single digits  
Marginal Markings: © 2002 USPS • Price • Plate numbers in four corners • Plate position diagram • Barcodes on back  
Catalog Item Number(s): 453720 Block of 4 — \$1.48  
453730 Block of 10 — \$3.70  
453740 Full pane of 20 — \$7.40  
453761 First day cover — \$0.75  
453793 Full pane w/FDC — \$8.15

## 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 STAMP-24, and at the Postal Store Website at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com). 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: LUNAR NEW YEAR - RAM COMMEMORATIVE STAMP, POSTMASTER, 433 WEST HARRISON STREET, CHICAGO, IL 60607-9998.

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 14, 2003.

Stamp Fulfillment Services (SFS) also offers first day covers for new stamp issues and postal 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 telephoning 1 800 STAMP-24 or writing to: INFORMATION FULFILLMENT, DEPT 6270, US POSTAL SERVICE, PO BOX 219014, KANSAS CITY, MO 64121-9014. First day covers remain on sale for at least one year after the stamp's issuance.