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HARLEM RENAISSANCE NOVELIST ZORA NEALE HURSTON
FEATURED ON U.S. POSTAGE STAMP

EATONVILLE, Fla. – Novelist, folklorist and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston was honored today by the U.S. Postal Service for her artistry and her celebration of black culture. With the 19th stamp in its Literary Arts series, the Postal Service pays tribute to one of America's most original and accomplished writers. A central figure in the Harlem Renaissance, Hurston wrote four novels, two books of folklore, an autobiography, and numerous short stories, plays and essays.



Zora Neale Hurston's 37-cent stamp features a portrait of Hurston by artist Drew Struzan based on a 1934 black-and-white photograph taken in Chicago by Carl Van Vechten. The background of the stamp recalls the setting of Hurston's novel "Their Eyes Were Watching God."

The first day of issue ceremony was held during the 14th Annual Zora Neale Hurston Street Festival of the Arts and Humanities in historic Eatonville, the oldest incorporated Black community in the nation and host of the annual festival. The stamp is available today at the Eatonville and nearby Maitland post offices only, and will be available beginning tomorrow at post offices throughout the country.

"The Zora Neale Hurston stamp continues our proud tradition of presenting people and events from our history that represent the very best of America's culture heritage," said Murry E. Weatherall, vice president of Diversity Development for the Postal Service, who dedicated the stamp.

"The revitalization of Zora Neale Hurston's unique work is a great contribution to the American experience, and we are honored to feature such an outstanding writer and anthropologist in the Literary Arts series," he said.

Joining Weatherall at the ceremony were Ossie Davis, acclaimed actor of stage, film and television; Elizabeth Van Dyke, award-winning actress and director; Congresswoman Corrine Brown (D-FL); Dr. Lois Hurston-Gaston, president of the Ybor City Campus, Hillsborough Community College, and Zora Neale Hurston's grandniece; N.Y. Nathiri, executive director of the Zora Neale Hurston National Museum of Fine Arts, Eatonville; Rev. Willie C Barnes, pastor of the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church; Charles Haugabrooks, vocalist; the Jones High School Master Singers; and Earl Artis, Jr., presiding official and manager of Public Affairs and Communications for the Postal Service's Southeast Area.

Honored guests included Anthony Grant, mayor of Eatonville; Dr. Clifford J. Hurston, Zora Neale Hurston's nephew; and other family members.

"This stamp is an inspiration to many of us and an indication of how hard work and perseverance came together to honor Zora Neale Hurston," said Brown. "This is an honor for African-American women, for the state of Florida and for the international community. Zora Neale Hurston's life and legacy serve as a role model and inspiration for our nation's children."

Hurston began her career as a writer in Washington, D.C., where she was a student at Howard University. She later moved to New York City and enrolled in Barnard College in Manhattan. The only African-American student at Barnard, Hurston studied with the pioneering anthropologist Franz Boas. In 1928 she received her bachelor's degree in anthropology.

Hurston was a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. On Jan. 10, Barbara Moore, Zeta's International President, sent out a "Call to Action" for all Zeta members to go to their local post office on Saturday, Jan. 25 to purchase Zora Neale Hurston postage stamps.

To see the Zora Neale Hurston stamp, visit the U.S. Postal Service Web site at 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 online at the Postal Store (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 \$66 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.

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