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**KOREAN WAR VETERANS SALUTE RELEASE OF NEW STAMP
ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMISTICE**

WASHINGTON — Yesterday morning before an emotional throng of Korean War veterans and their family and friends, Robert F. Rider of the presidentially appointed U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors proudly led dignitaries in the dedication of a new postage stamp honoring the Korean War Veterans Memorial.



“We are here today in our nation’s capital to do far more than simply dedicate a new postage stamp. We are also here to honor all the members of our nation’s Armed Forces who served in the Korean War,” Rider told thousands gathered on the National Mall near the shadowy, sculpted figures of the memorial.

Rider said that, although the Korean War has long been considered the “forgotten war,” he was proud the Postal Service had not forgotten and was once more paying tribute to the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice and those who returned home without fanfare.

The self-adhesive, 37-cent Korean War Veterans Memorial stamp is now available at Post Offices nationwide.

The first day of issue ceremony for the stamp was held in conjunction with the Department of Defense 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Armistice Ceremony. Joining Rider at the stamp ceremony were Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and entertainer and fellow Korean War veteran Ed McMahon.

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The Korean War Veterans Memorial was authorized by law in 1986. On July 27, 1995, the 42nd anniversary of the armistice, it was dedicated by President Bill Clinton and Kim Young Sam, president of South Korea.

The memorial features 19 stainless-steel statues that depict American troops in the Army, the Marines, the Navy and the Air Force. Shown marching in a wedge formation as if on patrol, the statues represent an ethnic cross-section of the United States.

The Mural Wall alongside the statues extends 164 feet and consists of 41 granite panels etched with images that are based on photographs of U.S. personnel and equipment from the Korean War. Another wall acknowledges the United Nations member countries that assisted South Korea in the conflict.

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, when communist troops from North Korea invaded South Korea. In response, President Harry S. Truman committed U.S. troops to lead a United Nations force charged with defending South Korea. Including the U.S. and South Korea, 22 nations provided military personnel, medical support and supplies. By July 27, 1953, when an armistice was signed at the village of Panmunjom, approximately 34,000 Americans had been killed in battle (with nearly 37,000 American deaths in Korea overall) and more than 103,000 had been wounded.

More than 3,000 soldiers from other UN countries were killed and 16,000 were wounded. Numbers for South Korean military casualties vary greatly, with estimates ranging from 50,000 to more than 400,000 dead and hundreds of thousands wounded. Civilian casualties are estimated to have been in the millions.

The U.S. continues to keep a military force of approximately 37,000 in South Korea.

The photograph on this stamp, taken by John W. Alli of Catonsville, Md., shows the statues at the Korean War Veterans Memorial shrouded in heavy snow. Alli took this photograph just before dawn during a snowstorm in Washington, D.C., in January 1996. He intended the photograph to be a retirement gift for his father, William, who is a Korean War veteran. Richard Sheaff of Scottsdale, Ariz., designed the stamp.

Previous U.S. stamps have also recognized the bravery of Korean War veterans and the significance of the Korean War in U.S. and world history. In 1985, the Postal Service issued the 22-cent Veterans Korea stamp. The Korean War, a 33-cent stamp, was issued in 1999 as part of the 1950s “Celebrate The Century” stamp pane.

To see the new stamp, visit the Postal Service Web site and open this press release at www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm.

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