

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 30, 2003

Contact: Media Relations
202-268-2155
Stamp News Release No. 73
www.usps.com

MICKEY MOUSE AND FRIENDS HONORED ON NEW STAMPS
UNVEILED BY U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

WASHINGTON — According to most dictionaries, the word “friendship” means the quality or condition of being friends, a friendly relationship and friendliness or good will. The U.S. Postal Service today unveiled four new commemorative postage stamps that celebrate friendship as portrayed by the Walt Disney studio, honoring some of the most beloved animated characters in the history of American entertainment.

The Art of Disney: Friendship stamps feature several world-famous friends: Goofy, Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck; Bambi and Thumper; Simba and his father, Mufasa; and Jiminy Cricket and Pinocchio. The Postal Service will issue the 37-cent, self-adhesive stamps next summer.



“Soon, with the help of some famous friends, it will be easy for our customers to add a cheerful touch to their cards, letters and packages as they correspond with their own friends and loved ones or conduct business using the mail,” said David Failor, executive director of Stamp Services for the Postal Service.

Added Mary Beech, director, Franchise Management, Disney Consumer Products: “The new postage stamps are a tremendous testament to the lasting popularity of Mickey Mouse and other beloved Disney characters like Bambi and Simba. We are honored to be working with the United States Postal Service to release to consumers such a wonderful and endearing stamp program.”

Mickey Mouse made his debut on Nov. 18, 1928, in the first synchronized sound cartoon, “Steamboat Willie.” With help from his pals, Goofy and the “fowl-tempered” Donald Duck, clever little Mickey quickly became an American icon.

A friend can make good times even more fun and make bad times more bearable. In Walt Disney's "Bambi" (1942), an energetic rabbit named Thumper becomes a lifelong friend to a young deer. Thumper accompanies Bambi in both pleasurable pursuits, such as their winter adventures on ice, and in adversity.

Our parents can be our best friends, as the cub Simba learns in "The Lion King" (1994) when his father, Mufasa, comes to his rescue after Simba is chased by hyenas. Simba idolizes Mufasa and hopes to grow up to be just like him. Sometimes, as in Walt Disney's animated film classic, "Pinocchio" (1940), a friend acts as our conscience and keeps us out of trouble — or, at least, tries to. After he is magically brought to life, the wooden marionette Pinocchio is assisted by diminutive Jiminy Cricket in his effort to become a real boy.

The Art of Disney: Friendship stamps feature illustrations by Disney artist Peter Emmerich. David Pacheco from Walt Disney Art Classics was the art director for the stamps.

This is the first of three stamp panes honoring the art of Disney to be issued by the Postal Service. Celebration and romance are the themes for future stamps in this series. Each year features four themed stamps, showcasing a breadth of quintessential Disney moments.

To see *The Art of Disney: Friendship* stamps visit the online Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop and click on "Release Schedule" in the Collector's Corner.

Current U.S. stamps and stationery, as well as a free catalog, are available by toll-free phone order at 1 800 STAMP-24. In addition, a selection of stamps and other philatelic items are available at the online Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop. Custom-framed art prints of original stamp art are available at www.postalartgallery.com.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits more than 141 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 \$68 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 43 percent of the world's mail volume — some 202 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year — and serves seven million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.