

USPS Launches Animal Rescue Program

A 50-year tradition will continue on April 30 with the dedication of the U.S. Postal Service's latest social awareness stamp: "Animal Rescue: Adopt a Shelter Pet." The sheet of stamps, featuring photos of five cats and five dogs, is one small part of the whole program supported by the USPS. The stamps had previously been unveiled on The Ellen DeGeneres Show on March 17.

The Postal Service has been working with DeGeneres and Halo: Purely for Pets, a company she co-owns, to promote the stamps and to

bring greater attention to the cause. Stamps to the Rescue is the name of the promotional campaign the Postal Service created to provide additional information about the stamps and information on the importance of pet adoption.

Every year, 6 to 8 million cats and dogs enter animal shelters, and of that number, nearly half are euthanized. Although the problem seems overwhelming, the key to the solution is adopting a shelter pet when seeking a new companion animal and ensuring that the animal is spayed or neutered.

The animals featured on the Animal Rescue: Adopt a Shelter Pet commemorative stamps are photographs of cats and dogs from a shelter in New Milford, Connecticut, taken by veteran stamp photographer Sally Andersen-Bruce. Derry Noyes was the designer and art director for the stamps.

The 44-cent stamps will be sold in panes of 20 for \$8.80. The goal is to have these stamps be the most pre-ordered stamp in history — possibly requiring a reprint before they are even available for sale. A total of 300 million stamps will be issued. This amounts to 4.5 times as many as the printing for the average commemorative stamp. In addition, if the Postal Service sells 150 million stamps by the end of May, they will be reprinted in a quantity of 120 million stamps.

A national cancellation, featuring the face of a dog and a cat, www.stampstotherescue.com, and Animal Rescue: Adopt a Shelter Pet, will run on mail processing equipment from April 30 through May 14.

The Postal Service is working with Ellen DeGeneres and Halo: Purely for Pets—a pet food company that DeGeneres co-owns—on the national promotion of the Animal Rescue: Adopt a Shelter Pet commemorative stamps. DeGeneres has a large, loyal following, and she is passionate about pet adoption. She has often addressed the subject on her show and in other public forums.

The goal is to increase public awareness of the problem and to promote humane and responsible pet care. As part of the program, Halo will be donating 1 million meals to animal shelters across the country.

Promotional posters and counter cards are being displayed in all Postal Service retail lobbies nationwide and will remain

Teddy, wire-haired Jack Russell Terrier. The owners of Teddy's mother were surprised when she had the litter. They couldn't own another pet, so they gave Teddy and his litter mates away.

Bianca, Calico. Bianca was adopted through a senior-to-senior program, which allows cats older than 6 years to be adopted by a senior citizen at no cost.

Buddy, Golden Retriever. Buddy is a purebred Golden Retriever who was purchased from a pet store. He had bad hips, and the family that purchased him couldn't care for him. He was given to the shelter.

Frankie, black, white, and tan with triangle on nose. Frankie was brought to the shelter with his mother and two litter mates. They were all very sick, and Frankie was the only one who survived.

Jake, Boston Terrier. Jake was born in a puppy mill in Missouri, trucked to Connecticut and sold to a pet store. A family bought him, and after 2 weeks decided it was too much work.



Willow, Maltese (Gray). Willow was left in a box by the door of the shelter when she was a small kitten. The animal control officer there adopted her.

Trevor, Labrador Retriever. Trevor and his litter mates were found abandoned at 8–10 weeks of age at a new home construction site. They were rescued by the Labrador Retriever Rescue of Connecticut, Inc.

Peaches, Gray, white, tan patch, and pink nose. Peaches was born under a porch. She and her litter mates were trapped, taken to the shelter, spayed and neutered, and put up for adoption.

Bindi Su, Australian Shepherd. Bindi Su was born at an Australian Shepherd Rescue program when her mother was handed over after her owner didn't want to deal with another litter of puppies.

Lucas, orange Tabby. Lucas wandered into the yard of a shelter volunteer, who brought him to the shelter where he was neutered and made available for adoption.

there until May 14. Local events also will be held across the country.

In conjunction with the March 17 unveiling, the Postal Service launched a microsite, www.stampstotherescue.com, that features information about the stamps, pet adoption, and the importance of spaying/neutering pets, as well as links to related sites, such as American Humane Association, Humane Society of the United States, and www.petfinder.com.

The site also features a "thermometer" on the left-hand

side that will initially show cans of Halo pet food increasing as sheets of stamps are pre-ordered. Once the million-meal mark has been reached, the thermometer will continue to display how many sheets have been pre-ordered, then sold after April 30.



Derry Noyes also was the Typographer for the stamps. The Modeler was Donald Woo. The pressure sensitive adhesive stamps were printed by the Banknote Corporation of America division of Sennett Security Products using an offset process with "USPS" microprinting. Colors used were magenta, yellow, cyan, black, olive green, gray blue, and two shades of brown.

The plate number in each corner of the pane consists of the letter "S" to identify Sennett as the primary contractor, followed by eight single digits, one for each print color.

USPS order numbers and prices are: 576000, pane of 20, \$8.80; 576063, First Day Cover Set of 10, \$8.20; 576068, Digital Color Postmark (DCP) Set of 10, \$15.00; 576071, Dog Certificate, \$4.95; 576072, Cat Certificate, \$4.95; 576077, Adopt a Shelter Pet Dog Diary, \$14.95; 576078, Adopt a Shelter Pet Cat Diary, \$14.95; 576084, Uncut Press Sheet, \$70.40; 576087, Bundle of 10 Catalogs (one of each animal on cover), \$9.95; 576091, Ceremony Program, \$6.95; 576094, Notecards 10/10, \$12.95; 576099, Cancellation Keepsake (set of 2 random cat & dog), \$11.95.

First Day Cancellations

To obtain First Day Cancellations, the usual rules apply. Purchase the stamps from a post office or stamp dealer, affix them to covers addressed to yourself or others and send them in an outer envelope to Animal Rescue: Adopt a Shelter Pet Stamps, c/o Postmaster, 7035 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Hollywood, CA 91605-9998. All request submissions must be postmarked by June 30. You may also include another envelope for return of your covers to protect them from damage or double-cancellation in the mail.

USPS Stamp Fulfillment Services also offers uncached first day covers, but most collectors prefer cached covers, which may be obtained from FDC cachet makers, either unserved before the issue date or served—often in formats and multiples not available from the USPS. Such cached covers may be obtained from *Mekeel's & Stamps* FDC advertisers.