

USPS Stamps Honor American Scientists



On June 16, in St. Paul, Minn., the USPS will issue a set of four American Scientists Forever commemoratives denominated as Forever stamps in a pressure-sensitive adhesive (PSA) pane of 20 stamps.

The four scientists who are being honored for their significant contributions to basic science are as follows:

- Chemist Melvin Calvin, who, according to <http://berkeley.edu>, “explored life’s processes using the carbon-14 isotope....After a long and complex search, Calvin revealed the complete path of carbon in photosynthesis to explain how plants convert sunlight to food. He went on to develop a leading center for the study of cancer, the brain, solar energy, and the origins of life....”

- Botanist Asa Gray. Per Wikipedia, “Asa Gray...is considered the most important American botanist of the 19th century. He was instrumental in unifying the taxonomic knowledge [that is, the scientific classification] of the plants of North America. Of Gray’s many works on botany, the most popular was his *Manual of the Botany of the Northern United States*, from New England to Wisconsin and South to Ohio and Pennsylvania Inclusive. This book, known simply as Gray’s *Manual*, has gone through a number of editions with botanical illustrations by Isaac Sprague, and remains a standard in the field.

- Physicist Maria Goeppert Mayer. Per http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/, “she was born in Germany and became the seventh straight generation of university professors. She came to the U.S. in 1930. Per Wikipedia, “Maria Goeppert-Mayer...was a German-born American theoretical physicist, and Nobel laureate in Physics for proposing the nuclear shell model of the atomic nucleus. She was the second female laureate in physics, after Marie Curie.”

- Biochemist Severo Ochoa. Per www.britannica.com, “Severo Ochoa...biochemist and molecular biologist...received (with Arthur Kornberg) the 1959 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine for discovery of an enzyme in bacteria that enabled him to synthesize ribonucleic acid (RNA), a substance of central importance to the synthesis of proteins by the cell. Spanish born Ochoa was a citizen of the U.S. as well as Spain.

For first day cancellations, affix the stamps to envelopes of choice addressed to yourself or others and send them in an outer envelope to American Scientists Stamp, Postmaster, PO Box 645001, St. Paul, MN 55164-5001. The deadline for requests is August 16, 2011. To protect your covers from damage or double cancelling you may also include a stamped envelope for their return under cover.