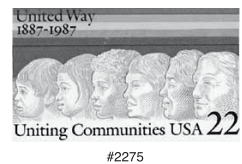


# 1987 Commemoratives



#2274a

Special Occasions



#2275

United Way

## 1987-88 Regular Issues

**Flag and Fireworks** - 22¢: With the issue of this stamp, the United States Postal Service (USPS) began using the gravure printing process once again to produce definitives. This process is more economical, and results in more colorful stamps. Although flags have appeared on stamps since 1869, this was the first time it was combined with fireworks and was also the first time it was pictured against a nighttime sky.

**"E" Stamp:** Following the USPS's announcement that the first-class letter rate would change to 25¢, the non-denominated "E" stamp was issued. Responding to unfavorable comments concerning the "drab" appearance of the previous non-denominated issues, the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee decided to link the stamp subject to the letter E. Shown from a moon's-eye view, the dramatic "Earth" design appears almost three dimensional. Printed in sheet, coil, and booklet form, this issue provided a colorful and attractive stamp with a popular topical theme - space.

**Flag and Clouds** - 25¢: The first definitive printed specifically to meet the new 25¢ rate pictured "Old Glory" waving against a light-blue sky filled with billowy cumulus clouds. Although flags have been featured as a major design element on stamps since 1957, many of them have been depicted flying over a national landmark. The Flag and Clouds stamp, the 15th in the Flag series, was issued in sheet, coil, and booklet form.

**Flag over Yosemite** - 25¢: With the issuance of this stamp, the USPS went back to the established pattern of displaying the American flag over a national landmark. This time, instead of picturing a Washington building such as the Capitol or the White House, a natural landmark from the opposite coast was chosen. Half Dome, a granite formation which rises 4,850 feet above the Merced River, is exactly what its name implies: a massive rock dome which appears as though it was split by a colossal cleaver. Visitors frequently ask, "What happened to the other half?" (The answer: "No one knows.") Indian legends say it is a wife who turned to stone as she fled from her husband, and

the dark streaks down the face of the rock are her tears.

**Honeybee** - 25¢: The honeybee is one of the world's most industrious and important insects. In the U.S. alone, more than 3 million beehives produce over 20 million pounds of honey. These figures are even more astounding when one learns that to produce a mere pound of honey, more than 550 bees have to visit at least 2.5 million flowers! By gathering nectar to manufacture honey and wax, bees also provide a very important service - pollinating crops and fruit trees. More than 3.5 million acres of seed crops depend on pollination, and the hardworking honeybee does 90% of the work!

**Pheasant** - 25¢: Booklet single. Released only as a booklet of twenty, the pheasant stamp features one of America's most handsome birds - the male ring-necked pheasant. Until 1881, the "common pheasant," as it is sometimes referred to, was anything but. A native of China, the ring-neck was successfully introduced when Owen H. Denny, consul general at Shanghai, shipped 21 of the birds to his brother's farm in Corvallis, Oregon. Today, the ring-necked pheasant, with its colorful plumage of iridescent greens, purples, and copper is found throughout the northern continental U.S. and lower Canada.

**Grosbeak and Owl** - 25¢: The Grosbeak/Owl booklet, like the pheasant booklet, was originally going to feature one bird. However, when the USPS saw artist Chuck Ripper's designs, they were so pleased they decided to use both of them. The booklet is arranged in a unique checkerboard pattern to accommodate both subjects. A member of the finch family, the rose-breasted grosbeak is found mainly in the Northeast. Like many of our other fine-feathered friends, the bright colors are restricted to the males. Nearly the same size as the grosbeak, the saw-whet owl is one of the smallest birds of prey. His fine-tuned senses, such as binocular-like eyesight and his keen hearing, plus the fluffy plumage, which allows him to swoop down silently on his prey, make him a superb hunter