

## Your Postal Podcast 62<sup>nd</sup> Edition Transcript – July 2013

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**Richard Watkins:** Welcome to Your Postal Podcast. This is Richard Watkins of U.S. Postal Service Corporate Communications. In this July 2013 edition, you'll hear from the owner of one of the muscle cars featured on a set of five new Forever stamps issued earlier this year. And you'll hear about a Postmaster who used USPS teddy bears to rally her community.

### Muscle Cars Segment

**Watkins:** It should come as no surprise that the new Muscle Cars Forever Stamps have shown strong sales. The stamps have proved so popular that a second printing has been ordered. I talked with Barry Walker, a New York City native, now living in southern California, who owns the 1967 Ford Shelby GT-500, which is among the cars featured in the set of five Muscle Cars stamps.

**Barry Walker:** I've owned that car for seven years. It was restored, I guess about, almost 15 to 18 years ago, before I bought it. And I still haven't found out exactly who restored it. And it's an original California car. I enjoy driving it. When I was younger, I had a '69 Mustang with a similar engine in it. So, you know, it brings back memories -- childhood memories from then.

**Watkins:** Walker said those memories began with model cars long before he moved on to the real deal.

**Walker:** I guess since I was 5, 6 years old, I started with model cars, then I got into the real thing. And I was always into cars. I worked as a mechanic, I hung around a gas station when I was, like, 13 years old. I learned how to do oil changes really young; tune-ups back then, brake jobs. And I enjoyed playing with them. Major jobs I won't do now, but I still do brakes and oil changes today.

**Watkins:** Walker joined Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe on a recent segment of "Jay Leno's Garage," and said family and friends are as thrilled about the new Muscle Cars stamps as he is.

**Walker:** I mean, I think they're all pretty excited about. And then when I had to bring the car up to Jay Leno's garage for the interview they had there with the artist and the Postmaster General, on Jay Leno's website, you can see the car in the background. And I was surprised how good it looked in his garage there. I figured with the lights on you'd start to see flaws in it. But the car really looked good. And I mean, I took some photos also. So they're all excited, my wife's really excited about it. She's told all her friends about it; they've gone, you know, and looked at it and seen everything.

**Watkins:** To watch the "Jay Leno's Garage" segment featuring the Muscle Cars Forever stamps, go to [www.jaylenosgarage.com](http://www.jaylenosgarage.com). Information about the Muscle Cars Forever stamps -- and the cars -- is available at [usps.com](http://usps.com).

### Teddy Bears Segment

**Watkins:** Many postal retail units across the country stock and sell themed teddy bears. They're popular among the young and old, but one Colorado Postmaster found a unique use for the bears that first responders are ecstatic about. David Rupert is here with the details.

**David Rupert:** With lights blazing, sirens blaring, and uniformed personnel present, the scene for an innocent child can be terribly frightening. Whether it's a vehicle accident, a domestic situation, or a police investigation, kids are naturally distressed at the confusion.

But in Teller County, Colorado, children in those situations are comforted by the very same stuffed bears sold in the local Post Office. Commander Jason Mikesell has been with the County Sheriff's Department for 17 years.

**Jason Mikesell:** When we find a child in need or they've been in a bad situation, whatever that may be, we normally try to build trust with those children and we'll give them a teddy bear or some type of stuffed animal. And it does, it builds trust with them to where it's easier for us to deal with the children and it gives them something they can hold onto.

**Rupert:** How did postal bears end up in the back of squad cars? Well, Divide Postmaster Monica Deluca heard about what the sheriff's department does in situations involving children. She looked at the bears in boxes in her stock room and hatched a plan. She got the sheriff's office to put out the word of their need for bears – and that replacements could be found at the Post Office.

**Monica Deluca:** We know the sheriff's department is out there trying to do their job and work with children in negative times. I decided to call the sheriff's department and see if they needed any more bears for their program. And the community would be involved in buying the bears.

**Rupert:** Monica stocked up and word of mouth helped hype a 30-day blitz bear adoption program. Members of the community ending up buying 124 bears and donated them back to the Sheriff's office. The small Post Office brought in \$1,600 in revenue, but more importantly helped the community make a better investment in the welfare of its children.

**Deluca:** So, this is how very positive these bears are. Something as simple as a bear just seems to make a big difference in a child's life. 'Cause everybody loves bears. Everybody loves kids. And we're just trying to figure out a way to put it all together.

**Rupert:** According to Commander Mikesell, the promotional push helped enhance the community's partnership with law enforcement.

**Mikesell:** So, this allows us through our community to help us. And it gives the community something to look at and feel good about assisting us with, too. From the children's eyes, you know, when you hand a bear to a child that small, you may see that light in the children's eyes come on – just that spark of hope, of interest in something else other than that stressful situation they're in at that moment -- and it's a beautiful thing.

**Rupert:** Cori Freed sold many of the bears from her position as a retail clerk. Once customers had a cause, they bought the bears with abandon. Word got out and even the local newspaper published a story. Soon, people were coming in from surrounding communities just to buy the bears.

**Cori Freed:** Yes, we sold a significant number of bears just very quickly. People would ask, where they'd be in line and see another person buy it and then they would ask about it.

**Rupert:** Customer Julie Tipton was one of the locals who embraced the Sheriff's program.

**Julie Tipton:** And I bought a Pooh Bear because I had a Pooh when I was a child. And I think it's a very good childhood memory that brings us comfort. It's easy for sure, convenient and it doesn't cost much.

**Rupert:** Julie also wrote a note on the tag, even though she didn't know the recipient.

**Tipton:** ...Because I wanted the person receiving the bear to know that we care for them and that it came from a real person. And then really there's someone out there that cared.

### News Roundup

**Watkins:** Now here's a brief roundup of recent Postal Service headlines.

The USPS recently released its 2012 Annual Sustainability Report, highlighting several accomplishments including reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, solid waste and facility energy use.

The Postal Service reported a 9.9 percent decrease -- or 1.3 million metric tons -- in greenhouse gas -- or GHG emissions -- since 2008. That's nearly equivalent to removing 270,000 passenger vehicles from the road for a year. The goal is to reduce GHG emissions by 20 percent by fiscal year 2020. In addition, the Postal Service has decreased facility energy use by 34 percent since 2003, achieving the goal of a 30 percent reduction by 2015.

USPS Chief Sustainability Officer Thomas G. Day said, "The Postal Service continues to make sustainability progress that is not only the right thing to do for the environment, but is right for our business. We are exceeding targets in key areas and are working to improve efforts across the organization every day."

You can find the 2012 Sustainability Report online at [usps.com/green](http://usps.com/green).

In other news, wildfires have scorched large areas in the West, including the Black Forest Fire, which roared through a Colorado Springs, Colorado, neighborhood and within just a few days destroyed more than 500 homes, including those of three postal employees. More than 8,000 deliveries were impacted by evacuations and emergency suspensions across several area Post Offices.

As soon as evacuation orders were lifted, carriers with vehicles full of mail were out servicing the thousands of homes that were spared and helped the area begin to recover. At a press conference announcing the restoration of mail service, assembled evacuees cheered the news.

Similar responses were seen in other wildfires, including the Yarnell Hill Fire in Arizona, where 19 firefighters lost their lives and 127 structures burned -- most of them homes.

Yarnell Postmaster Janice Middleton said, "While our postal employees work to continue to connect the mail with area residents, our thoughts and prayers are with the many families whose loved ones were taken while protecting all of us."

Thanks for listening to *Your Postal Podcast*. Now, we'd like to hear from you. Please email your feedback and story ideas to YourPostalPodcast at USPS dot com.

One lucky listener who emails us a comment about this month's podcast will be picked at random to receive an Indianapolis 500 First Day of Issue Collection folder, including a pane of 20 Indianapolis 500 Forever Stamps and the official program from the May 20, 2011 ceremony celebrating the first day of issue for the colorful stamps. The winner will be selected from all qualifying comments emailed to [YourPostalPodcast@usps.com](mailto:YourPostalPodcast@usps.com) by Friday, August 2nd, 2013.

Our congratulations go out to Bill Schmidt of Denver, Colorado, who emailed us a comment about June's podcast and has won a free sheet of 20 Latin Music Legends Forever Stamps, along with five digital-color-postmarked, stamped keepsake envelopes.

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