



Topical Tidbits

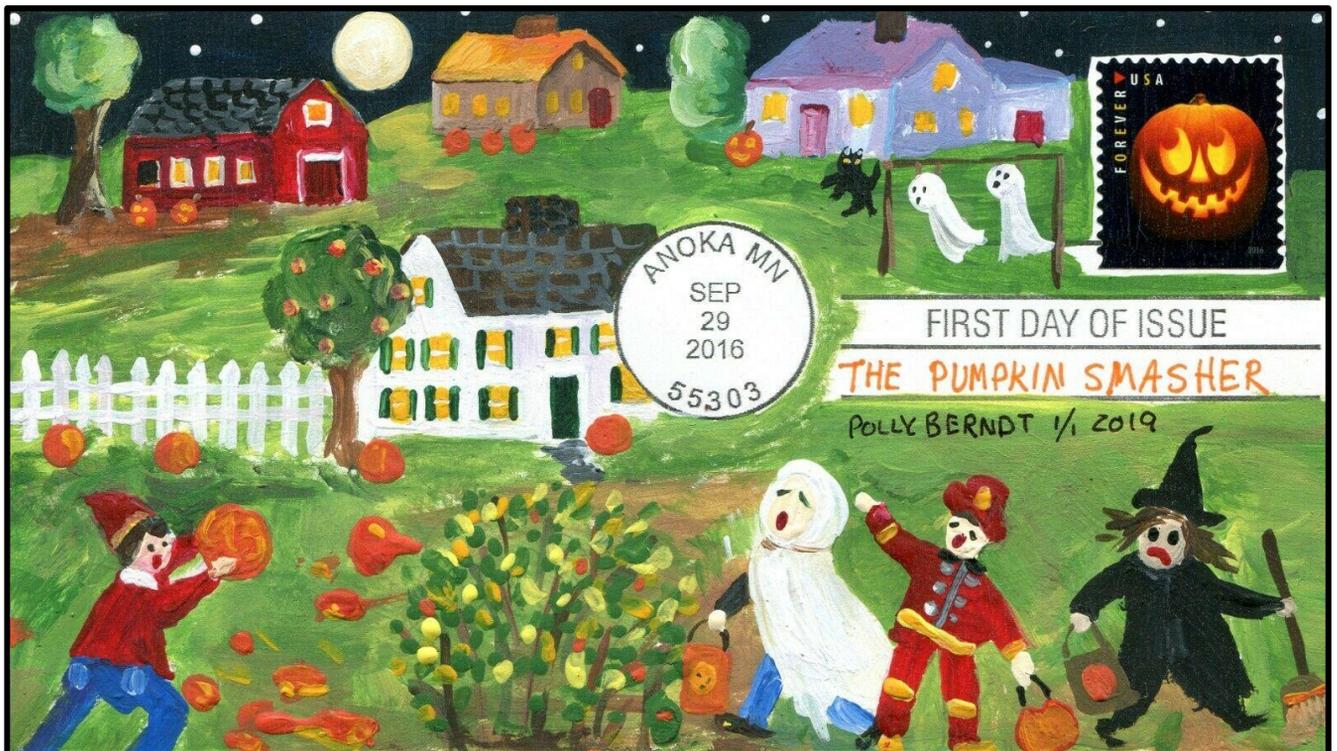
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Pumpkins

The fall holidays of Halloween and Thanksgiving just wouldn't be the same without pumpkins. Harvested in October, this New World fruit is very rich in vitamins. The flowers, seeds, and flesh are edible and can be used to make soups, desserts, and breads. In this issue there's a recipe for making pumpkin bread along with lots of other pumpkin-related activities. There are also two album pages, one for pumpkins and one jack o'lanterns. (There is a difference!) Enjoy!



This beautiful, hand painted cover by Polly Berndt is called “The Pumpkin Smasher.” Count up the number of each item you see and write it on the lines below.

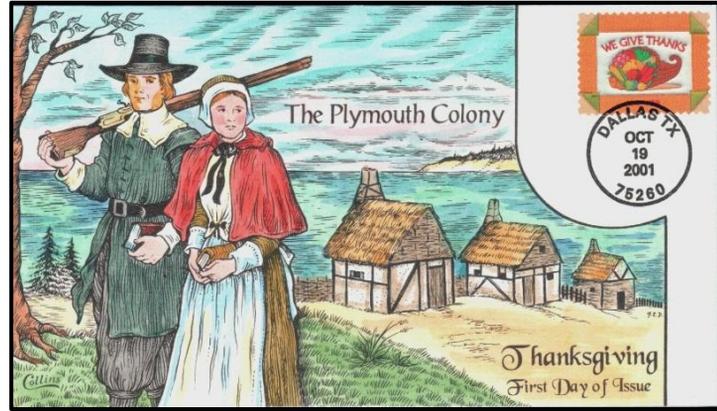
_____ ghosts _____ apples _____ children _____ cats
_____ pumpkins (unsmashed!)

Answers: 3 ghosts, 8 apples, 4 kids, 1 cat, 15 pumpkins

Pumpkin History

Pumpkins are an original New World food product and have been cultivated for at least 9,000 years in North and South America. They are part of the family of vining plants that includes cucumbers, squash, gourds, melons, and others. Pumpkins were a staple in the diet of Native American tribes who raised pumpkins as one of three main crops—maize (corn), beans, and squash. They baked or boiled the pumpkin flesh, toasted the seeds for tasty snacks, and ground the seeds into flour or meal for making bread and gruel. They also dried and saved seeds to use for planting the next year’s crop.

When European settlers arrived in the Americas, the natives showed them how to plant, grow, and use pumpkins. “We had pumpkins in the morning and pumpkins at noon. If it were not for pumpkins, we’d be undone soon,” one settler wrote in 1683. Pumpkin pudding was a real treat for the early settlers. To make it, they sliced off the top of a pumpkin, removed the seeds, filled it with milk, and then baked it until the milk had been absorbed. (Taken from Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom)

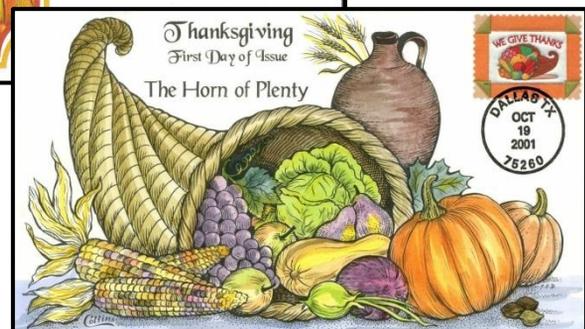
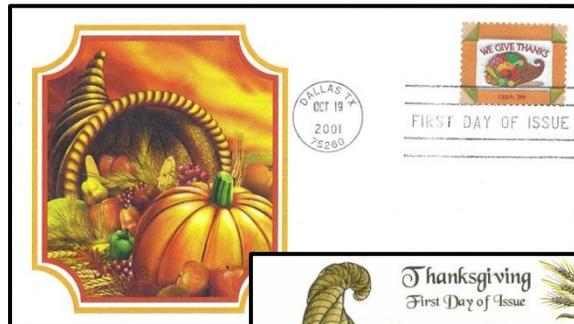


The native inhabitants of the region around Plymouth Colony were various tribes of the Wampanoag people, who had lived there for some 10,000 years before the Europeans arrived. The postcard (left) shows Wampanoag women preparing squash. The Fred Collins cover (right) is of Plymouth Colony. The stamp features a cornucopia which includes a pumpkin.

Cornucopia of Stamps

The word *cornucopia* is first documented in an English dictionary printed in 1508. It derives from two separate Latin words, *cornu*, meaning horn, and *copia*, which means plenty. The cornucopia is a symbol of bountiful harvests and is often filled with fruits, vegetables, and nuts.

Make your own cornucopia! First, color the cornucopia on the next page and glue it to a large sheet of paper. Then, cut out the stamp images you would like to feature in your cornucopia. Arrange them to your liking and then glue in place.

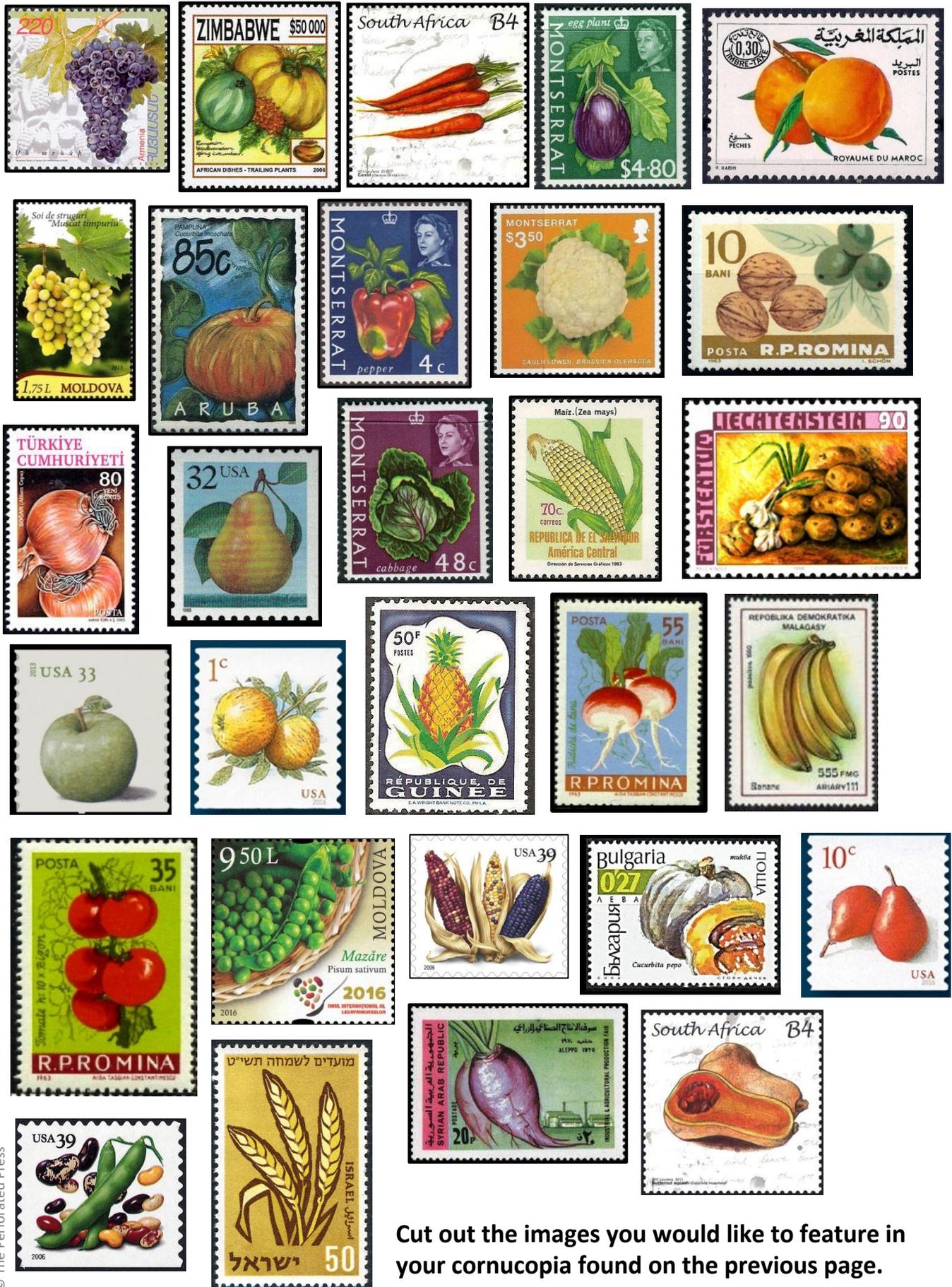


Cornucopia

Color, cut out,
and then glue
to a large
sheet of paper.



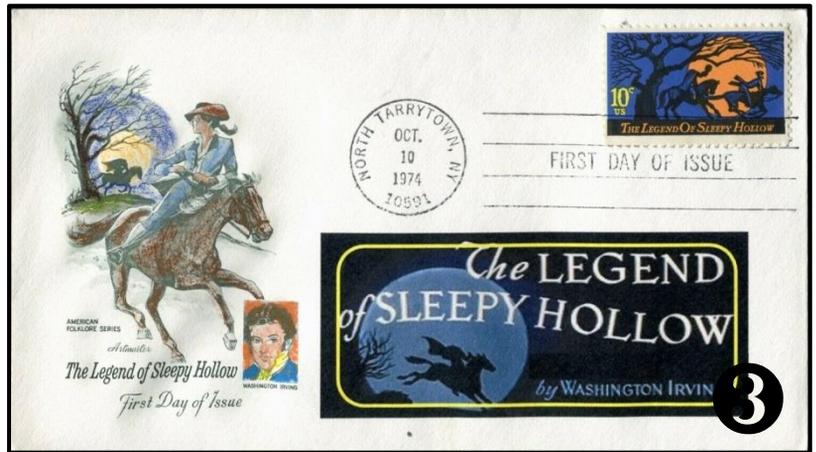
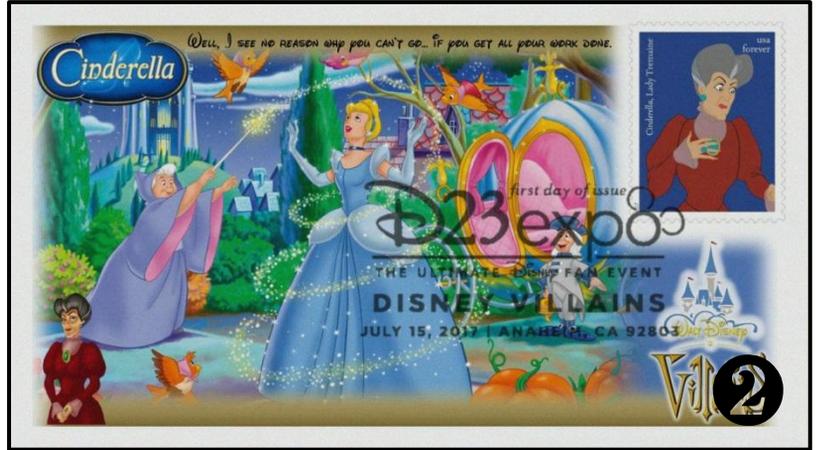
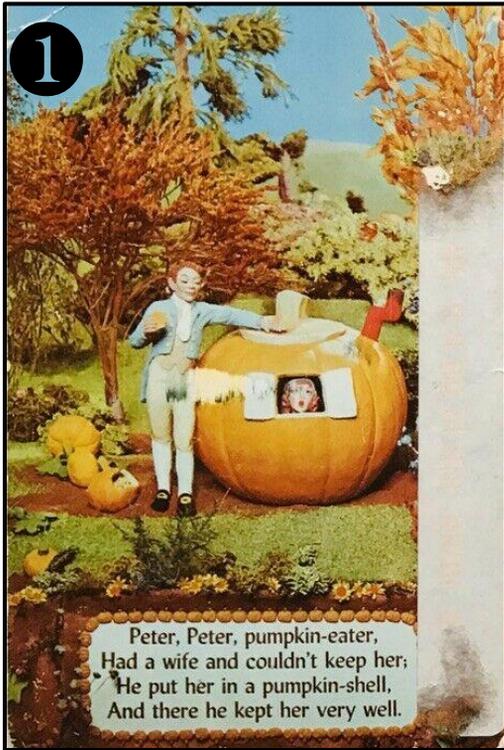
Cornucopia Stamps



Cut out the images you would like to feature in your cornucopia found on the previous page.

Pumpkins In Literature

Match the correct illustration to the description below.

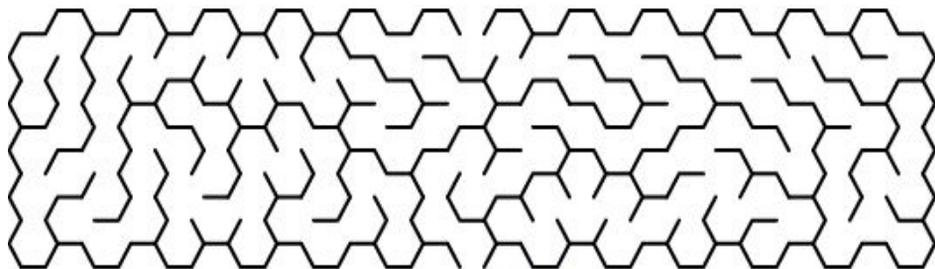


_____ 1. In this fairy tale, a poor mistreated girl gets her wish to go to the ball when her fairy godmother turns a pumpkin into a coach.

_____ 2. In this Mother Goose rhyme, a man puts his wife in a pumpkin shell to keep her from running away.

_____ 3. In this story by Washington Irving, a schoolmaster is chased by the Headless Horseman who throws his jack o' lantern head at him.

Help Ichabod Crane escape the Headless Horseman.



Philatelic Pumpkin Patch

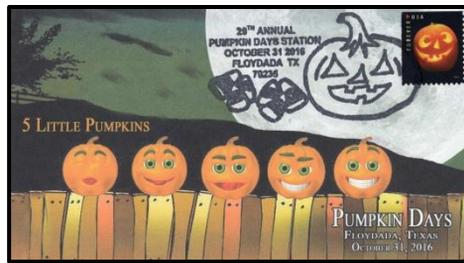


There are many beautiful pumpkin stamps from all over the world. These are from Aruba, Liechtenstein, and Montserrat.

This die-cut poster stamp was used to promote the Ottawa Fair.



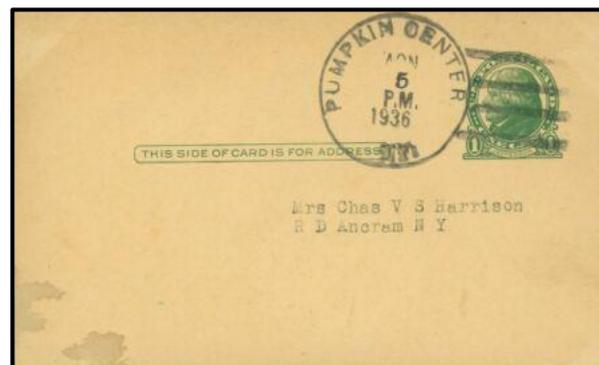
These fancy cancels were all handmade from cork and used at various post offices around the country. In the 1890s, the Post Office Department issued new regulations standardizing the form of cancellations.*



Examples of event cancels. The first is from a stamp exhibition, KAZOOPEX. The middle one is from Pumpkin Days in Texas. The one on the right is postmarked Blacklick, Ohio.



Left: A souvenir sheet from Maldives. Right: A postal card sent from Pumpkin Center, Kentucky.



*Special thanks to George F. DeKornfeld for permission to use images of his fancy cancel pumpkins.

Pumpkin Bread

Recipe for: Pumpkin Bread



Ingredients:

1-2/3 cups all-purpose flour
 1-1/2 cups sugar
 1 teaspoon baking soda
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 3/4 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
 2 large eggs, room temperature
 1 cup canned pumpkin
 1/2 cup oil
 1/2 cup water

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°. Combine first 8 ingredients. Whisk together eggs, pumpkin, oil, and water; stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Pour into a greased 9x5-inch loaf pan. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 65-70 minutes. Cool in pan 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack.

Circle the stamps if they're ingredients in the recipe above.



Answers: All the stamps should be circled except: honey, chocolate, cinnamon, cheese, and potatoes.

Jack O'Lanterns

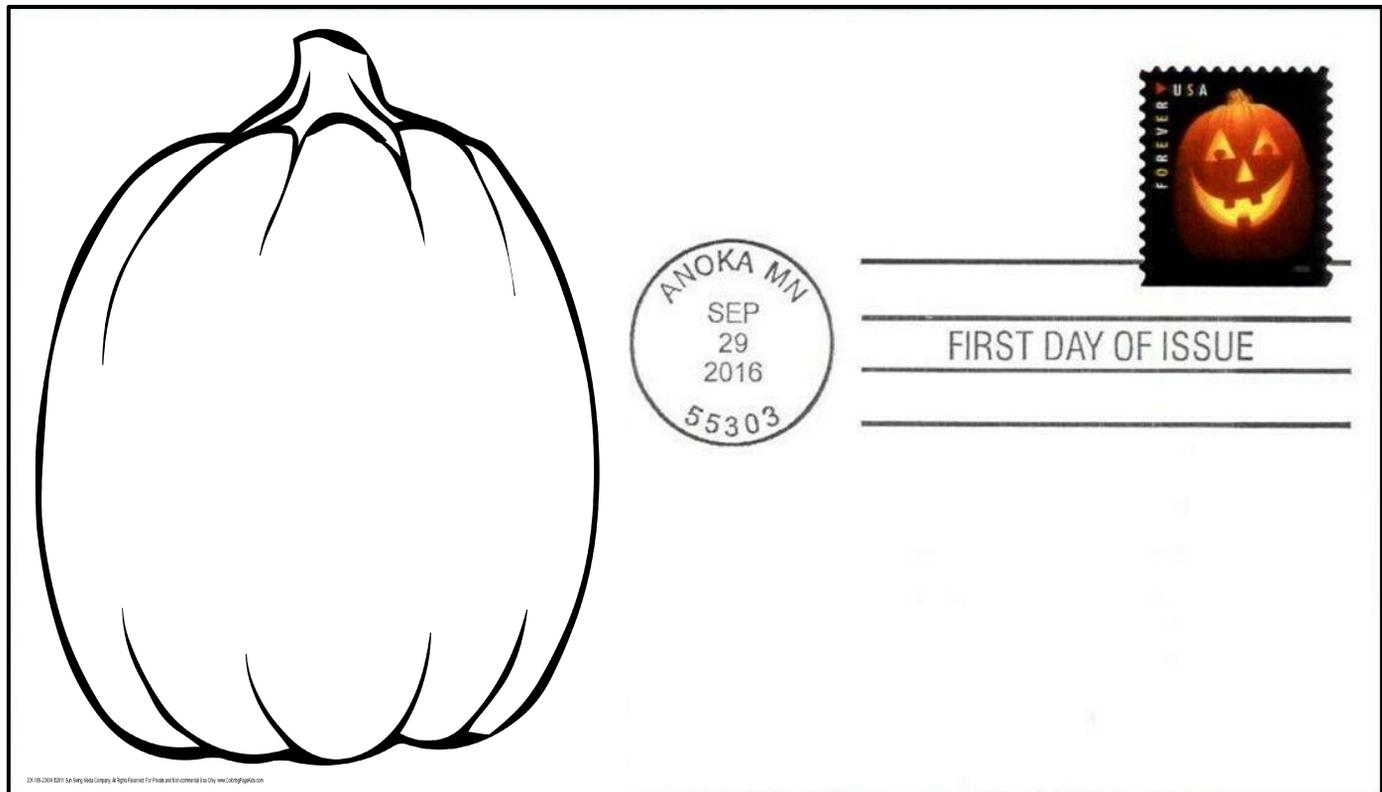


The Panda Cachet at the top, gives the history of jack o' lanterns. It says that the term "reportedly originated from an Irish myth about a man called 'Stingy Jack' who fooled Satan and was barred from both heaven and hell. After Jack died, Satan sent Jack off into the night with just a burning coal to light the way." Jack placed the coal inside of a turnip he carved out. "When immigrants brought Halloween to America, they found that pumpkins made perfect jack o' lanterns."



This cover features artwork by Norman Rockwell and has a digital colored postmark from the USPS.

Decorate your own jack o' lantern below. The postmark is from Anoka, MN, the "Halloween Capital of the world." The town hosted one of the first Halloween parades in the 1920s and continues to celebrate the holiday each year with several parades.



Pumpkins



Jack-O'Lanterns

