

# STAMP

## news & notes

### A Louisiana Purchase History Lesson Is In The Mail

(NAPSA)—Often referred to as the greatest real estate deal in history, the 1803 Louisiana Purchase created one of the largest nations in the world. The United States Postal Service has now commemorated the bicentennial of this event by issuing a postage stamp.

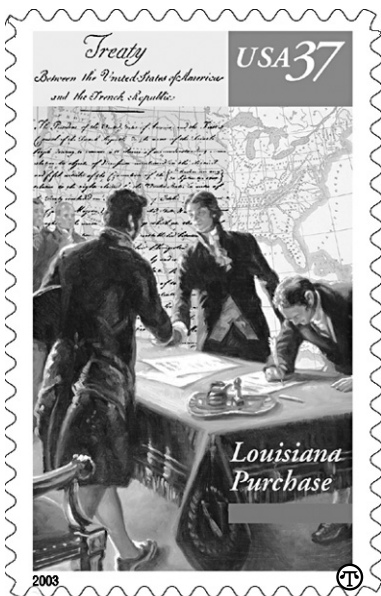
The 37-cent self-adhesive stamp is now available at post offices nationwide.

“The Louisiana Purchase was a critical milestone in our nation’s history, allowing our young nation to double in size with the stroke of a pen. We join the people of Louisiana—and the 12 other states that today include parts of that famous purchase—in celebrating this bicentennial anniversary with the issuance of the Louisiana Purchase stamp,” said Richard J. Strasser, Jr., chief financial officer and executive vice president for the U.S. Postal Service and the stamp dedicating official.

France had originally claimed Louisiana, a vast tract of uncharted wilderness west of the Mississippi, but ceded it to Spain in 1762, prior to the 1763 Treaty of Paris. On Oct. 1, 1800, Spain secretly transferred the land back to France.

President Thomas Jefferson learned of the transfer in 1801. He sent Robert R. Livingston as U.S. Minister to France with instructions to negotiate for a port at the mouth of the Mississippi or, failing that, for permanent trading rights at the port of New Orleans. In January 1803, Jefferson dispatched James Monroe to France with an appropriation from Congress to buy New Orleans, as well as eastern and western Florida, if possible.

On April 11, the night before



**In the background of the new stamp is a map of the United States overlaid with an English translation of the treaty.**

Monroe joined him in Paris, Livingston was informed that Napoleon was willing to sell the entire territory of Louisiana to the U.S. Livingston and Monroe quickly began formal negotiations with Francois Barbé-Marbois, France’s minister of finance. They agreed upon a price of \$15 million, and in early May they signed a treaty to seal the transaction. The treaty was dated April 30, 1803.

Previous stamps commemorating the Louisiana Purchase include four stamps in the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition issue.

The Louisiana Purchase stamp, and other current stamps, are available online at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop) or by calling 1-800-stamp-24.