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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 20, 2016

Anoka to Host First-Day-of-Issue & Jack-o'-lantern Forever® Stamp Unveiling

ANOKA, Minn. – In March of this year, the City of Anoka was selected by the U.S. Postal Service to be the official host city for the First-Day-of-Issue (FDOI) Dedication Ceremony, which will unveil the four 2016 Jack-o'-lantern Forever® stamps. Anoka is honored to have been chosen to host this event which will kick off many Halloween festivities that will occur in October, in the “Halloween Capital of the World.”

The First-Day-of-Issue Dedication Ceremony, open to the public, will take place on Thursday, Sept. 29, 2016 at Anoka City Hall River Plaza, 2015 First Ave. N. The plaza will open at 10:30 a.m. Shortly thereafter, local elementary school students will parade across the stage in their costumes, while students from the Anoka High School Ensemble will provide entertaining background music.

The ceremony will begin promptly at 11 a.m. by Master of Ceremonies Emily Engberg, Field Reporter from the television show Twin Cities Live. It will include the Presentation of Colors and the National Anthem, followed by remarks from Peter Turok, President of the Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce. Joseph Corbett, Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice President, of the U.S. Postal Service will conduct the Official Stamp Dedication - revealing the commemorative postage stamps. Remarks will follow by Jim Abeler, Minnesota State Senator; Sally Andersen-Bruce, Photographer; Rebecca Ebnet-Mavencamp, Executive Director of the Anoka County Historical Society; and Youth Speaker Samantha Jenson will recite a poem.

An autograph session will be held where guests may have their printed programs autographed by those that spoke during the ceremony. Plus, under the tents, guests will have the opportunity to purchase the postage stamps, FDOI cancellation envelopes, and other merchandise. Several vehicles from the City of Anoka and the U.S. Postal Service will be on display, as well as the Anoka Halloween parade float which will be playing Halloween tunes. We encourage guests to utilize the selfie stations and connect with the U.S Postal Service online about the jack-o'-lantern stamps using #HalloweenStamps. The celebration in the plaza concludes at 1:45 p.m.

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In the spirit of Halloween, the U.S. Postal Service issues these delightfully eerie stamps featuring photographs of four different jack-o'-lanterns. These creatively carved pumpkins have been symbols of Halloween in the United States since the late 19th century, not long after celebrations of the holiday began here. These are the first Halloween-themed stamps issued by the Postal Service. Paul Montanari designed and carved the pumpkins under the art direction of Derry Noyes of Washington, DC. Sally Andersen-Bruce photographed the lit jack-o'-lanterns used on the stamps.

Anoka's partners have planned additional activities following the ceremony; **Plaque Commemoration:** This year marks the 100th anniversary of the historic "Old Post Office" located at 300 E. Main St. At 2 p.m. the commemoration of the plaque, donated by Anoka's Heritage Preservation Commission, will be held at the former Post Office building. **Signed, Sealed, & Dinnered:** The Anoka County Historical Society will be hosting it's Signed, Sealed, & Dinnered fundraiser event at Green Haven Golf Course & Event Center at 5:30 p.m. For details and tickets, visit www.anokacountyhistory.org.

The City of Anoka thanks the following event partners/sponsors:

- U.S. Postal Service
- 101 Market
- Anoka American Legion Edward B. Cutter Post 102
- Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce
- Anoka Business & Landowners Association
- Anoka County Historical Society
- Anoka Grain & Feed
- Anoka Halloween, Inc.
- Anoka-Hennepin School District 11
- Bob 106FM
- Lotsadesign Graphic Services
- North Suburban Eye Specialists
- Pearson Family Farm
- Quad Cities Television
- St. Stephen's Catholic School
- Throne Family
- Twin Cities Gateway
- Twin Cities Live

Each October in Anoka, the Halloween Capital of the World, a local volunteer organization known as Anoka Halloween, Inc. and its sponsors work together to draw thousands of people to the city by organizing numerous events and activities throughout the month of October. For more information about the City of Anoka and Anoka Halloween, please visit www.ci.anoka.mn.us and www.anokahalloween.com.

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Cutline: One of the set of four 2016 U.S. Postal Service Jack-o'-lantern Forever® stamps to be officially unveiled in Anoka on Sept. 29, 2016.