Any other requirements? All cancellations must carry the name of the exhibition or event, followed by the word "Station" or "Sta.," the city, state, and ZIP Code (NOT the ZIP+4 Code). They must also include the month, day, and year of the cancellation.

Okay, I've received the request in writing, as well as the proper camera-ready artwork, where do I send it?

In Kansas:

Retail Specialist US Postal Service

7117 W. Harry St. Wichita KS 67276-9603

In Nebraska/Iowa:

Retail Specialist

US Postal Service 5303 N. 91st Ave.

Omaha NE 68134-9603

In a few weeks, you should expect to receive your hand stamp. Store it in a secure location, such as a safe or locked drawer.

The local newspaper wants to print the cancellation--is that okay? Yes. You should stamp a good, clear impression of the cancellation on a blank piece of paper, make a copy of it, and give the copy to the newspaper. When you receive your hand stamp, you will also get a poster depicting the cancellation that can be posted in your lobby or other appropriate areas.

What's the best way to make a good, clear cancellation? First, use a cloth or felt stamp pad. It should be well inked, but not over-inked. Place the hand stamp on the pad to ink it. Then, carefully position the device on the envelope or postcard, making certain that the stamp will be cancelled. It is not necessary-not even preferred, that a lot of the inked impression is on the postage stamp. Collectors like to be able to read the cancellation as well as still see the postage stamp. As you press the hand stamp on the item you are cancelling, you can gently but firmly roll the device, top to bottom, taking care not to touch the wooden edges of the device to the paper. The hand stamp should be re-inked after every cancellation. The more cancellations you do, the easier they will get. When you receive your hand stamp--PRACTICE!!

The announcement was in the Postal Bulletin and I'm starting to receive mail order requests from customers. You may apply the cancellation to the items you have received, but you cannot release them to any customers. Keep the cancelled items in a secure location. If you cancel the envelopes or cards each day you receive them, you will avoid the "rush" on the day of the event. Set aside a few minutes a day to apply the cancellations. If you do not have to hurry, you will do a better job and will have fewer requests for replacements after the cancellation is over. Remember, DO NOT release any cancellations to customers until the day of the cancellation.

Is there anything I should watch for while I'm honoring the cancellation requests? You should always ensure that whatever you are cancelling has the appropriate First-Class postage on it—either 32 cents or 20 cents, depending on if it is a one-ounce envelope or postcard. If a stamp for less than the appropriate amount has been affixed, you will need to ask the customer to apply additional postage, or in the case of a mail order request, return the envelope uncancelled and enclose a short note explaining why the requested service cannot be performed. If the customer remails the item with the additional postage, you should then honor their request.

Also check the postage stamp you are cancelling. If it was issued after the date on the hand stamp, do not cancel it!

Where do I offer the cancellation? It must not be offered as a regular service at your window. Set up a booth in the lobby, or on site at the event. If you set up at the event, be certain that security for the stamp stock and cash is adequate.