
NEWS RELEASE

Louisiana
Department of State



Jay Dardenne
Secretary of State

P.O. Box 94125
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9125
jacques.berry@sos.louisiana.gov

Jacques Berry
Press Secretary
225.362.5103

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**LINCOLN COMMISSION CELEBRATES 200TH BIRTHDAY,
KICKS OFF PENNY CAMPAIGN AT STATE CAPITOL**

Secretary of State Jay Dardenne and the Louisiana Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission are announcing the celebration of Lincoln's 200th birthday at 3 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 12 on the steps of the State Capitol. Secretary Dardenne will also kick off the Children's Lincoln Penny Campaign during the event.

The campaign, of which Secretary Dardenne will serve as chairman, will raise money for UNICEF to battle tuberculosis and typhoid, the diseases that took the lives of Lincoln's three sons: Tad, Willie and Eddie. Students across the state will collect pennies through their schools during 2009 in honor of Lincoln's good will toward children. David Madden, chairman of the commission, suggested the idea for the campaign to Glasgow Middle School teacher Melanie Hanley. Students in Hanley's classes took up a challenge last week to start a national campaign in her classroom.

"We are confident that the appeal of this campaign is so compelling that it will spread throughout the state and from here throughout the nation," Secretary Dardenne said.

The members of the Bicentennial Commission are in the process of formulating procedures for collecting the pennies and transmitting the proceeds. Entities which will be invited to consider participation in the campaign include the state school board, Chase Bank, Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the national Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and UNICEF. The commission will also ask First Lady Michelle Obama to serve as the national chair of the campaign.

"The national Lincoln Commission in the Library of Congress told me that the Children's Lincoln Penny Campaign is one of the most original and powerful concepts that she has heard," Madden said.

For more information about the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, call David Madden at 225.344.3630, e-mail dmadden@lsu.edu or visit www.sos.louisiana.gov/lincoln.

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