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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lincoln Bicentennial grants available for Illinois communities

Applications being taken through November 15

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission encourages Illinois communities and organizations to apply for grants that will help commemorate the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s birth. The Commission will accept applications, available at www.lincoln200.net, through November 15, 2007.

A total of \$500,000 in state appropriations will be awarded for Lincoln Bicentennial grants. The Commission awarded more than \$440,000 in grants last fiscal year to 14 projects in Illinois.

“The Commission’s top priority is to support programs developed by or for Lincoln-related communities and historic sites in Illinois,” said Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Chair Marilyn Kushak. “These grant funds will help create a positive economic impact on these communities and the State of Illinois, and help us plan a 200th birthday celebration worthy of the Land of Lincoln.”

The Commission will provide financial assistance to organizations and institutions offering programs that demonstrate Lincoln’s Illinois heritage and gain the maximum impact and outreach. These grants are available to historical, educational, arts and cultural organizations and institutions, museums, local communities and municipalities, nonprofit institutions and governmental agencies and will focus on Education, Interpretation and Special Events. Special consideration will be given to proposals with at least a one-to-one match of cash or in-kind contributions and also to projects having a lasting impact on their communities and the State of Illinois. The grant funds will be awarded based on the Bicentennial Commission’s five major initiatives:

- The Rural Program Initiative – targeting communities of 2,500 or less to assist in programmatic opportunities.

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- The School Program Initiative – aiming to bring the bicentennial to the schools in Illinois.
- The Public Program Initiative – seeking to support educational programs presented by community organizations, colleges, universities, libraries, museums, and other educational, arts and cultural organizations and institutions in Illinois.
- The Legacy Projects Initiative – intending to create visible public legacies of the bicentennial celebration including enhancements to existing public monuments or sites.
- The Historic Sites Interpretation Initiative – designed to support the creation and preservation of live interpretative programs at Lincoln-related sites throughout Illinois.

Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky on February 12, 1809 and lived more than 30 years of his life in the State of Illinois, leaving his hometown of Springfield to assume the duties as the country's 16th President.

Grant applicants may visit www.lincoln200.net or contact:

Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission
112 North Sixth Street
Springfield, Illinois 62701
Fax: (217) 557-4592

The Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, formed by Gov. Rod Blagojevich in February 2006, is working closely with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, tourism agencies and many other institutions and organizations to organize events and programming beginning in 2008. The commission is also partnering with local communities on their bicentennial plans.

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