



NEWS RELEASE

Indiana students to take part in Lincoln Bicentennial celebration through service projects, contests, new books and more

EVANSVILLE (Sept. 8, 2008) – Lincoln Elementary School fourth-graders helped celebrate the Indiana Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial by accepting books about Lincoln that are being distributed to schools statewide.

Principal Kimberly Johnson and a class of local students received the books “Abe Lincoln Remembers” and “Abe Lincoln’s Hat” from Dr. Suellen Reed, Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction and Connie Nass, chairwoman of the Indiana Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission.

“The Indiana Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission wants Indiana’s school children to participate in – and learn from – the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s birth,” said Nass.

To help students discover more about Lincoln and support teachers’ instruction, each of the state’s 2,266 schools will receive grade-level-appropriate books about the 16th president. Books will be placed in school libraries for general use by the IALBC.

Lincoln Bicentennial Schools

In addition, every Indiana school is invited to become an official Indiana Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial School. To earn the designation, local educators agree to develop programs including interdisciplinary academic studies, writing assignments, service projects and more. Ingenuity is encouraged.

With built-in service projects, Indiana students will have a variety of opportunities to be inspired and engaged by Abraham Lincoln’s life and work. For example, because Lincoln established a day of Thanksgiving during the Civil War, students are encouraged to provide or serve food at a shelter, and because Lincoln’s sister, Sarah, and her child died during childbirth, students are encouraged to raise funds for a children’s hospital.

The deadline for submitting proposals is Sept. 30. So far, 33 schools throughout the state have pledged to participate.

“We’re pleased that we have schools from as far north as Hammond and Elkhart in the northwest, Fort Wayne and Waterloo in the northeast, as well as Evansville, Lincoln City and Lynnville in the south,” said Nass.

All participating schools will be recognized for their efforts with a certificate and a free President Lincoln Lilac Tree for the school.

Dr. Reed said, “Many Hoosiers may not realize that Lincoln spent his formative years in Indiana from ages 7 to 21. Those are the years that shape and mold the character and values of our children; and

Indiana shaped Lincoln. Our children will hear others talk about books they have read, about his life and his time here in Indiana. We encourage everyone to participate in that community conversation.”

Lincoln Resources

To help teachers pass these important lessons on to Hoosier students, the Indiana Department of Education has created an online resource guide, “One State, One Story: Indiana Learns about Lincoln.” Available at www.doe.in.gov/lincoln, the interactive resource offers teachers a variety of innovative approaches for incorporating Lincoln’s life and history into existing lessons, student projects and related activities aligned to state academic standards. Designed as a living resource to Lincoln’s life and legacy, the guide will expand over time.

Bookmarks were also developed by the Department of Education the Indiana Humanities Council and the Indiana State Library with financial support from the Ball Brothers Foundation. Each provides a list of suggested Lincoln books and readings in a variety of genres for various grade levels.

Lincoln Contests

To further engage students in the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s birth, the IALBC is sponsoring three competitions: an essay contest for high school students with a top prize of \$5,000, a PowerPoint contest for middle school students with a top prize of \$900, and a commemorative stamp art contest for elementary school students with 12 \$200 prizes. Contest details are available at www.IndianasLincoln.org. The deadline for entries is Nov. 1, 2008.

“We would be delighted to be overwhelmed with entries for these competitions,” said Nass. “The most important thing, though, is that students understand that an amazing world leader came from Indiana and how they, too, have the potential to be successful in life.”

The Indiana Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission was formed in 2006, by the Indiana General Assembly, to commemorate America’s greatest president and showcase his Hoosier roots.

To learn more about Indiana’s Lincoln sites and statewide bicentennial efforts, visit www.IndianasLincoln.org.

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