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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Special delivery

Bicentennial envelope design contest winners announced

SPRINGFIELD – A new memento of Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday has been signed, sealed and delivered.

The Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission (IALBC) today announced the winners of the Bicentennial Envelope Design Contest, and announced that packages of envelopes featuring the winning designs may be purchased at several locations prior to and during the February 2009 Bicentennial. The winning designs may be viewed at the IALBC website, www.lincoln200.net. The winners are:

- Kindergarten – 7th Grade: Kyle G. O'Malley of Highland Park.
- 8th – 12th Grade: Marcos Rodriguez of Chicago, a student at Illinois School for the Deaf in Jacksonville.
- Adult Amateur: Robert E. McKibben of Springfield.
- Adult Professional: Jane Bucci of Springfield.

In addition, renowned New York artist Sacha Newley has authorized the use of his artwork on a fifth envelope in the series. Newley recently donated the original painting to Lincoln College in Lincoln, Illinois.

The winning designs will be sold on envelopes in packages of five for \$15 per set at Tinsley Dry Goods Store in the Lincoln-Herndon Law Offices building in downtown Springfield beginning in mid-January. A total of 2,000 envelope sets will be produced. Buyers can bring the envelopes to the official U.S. Postal Service first issuance of the four new Lincoln Bicentennial postage stamps on February 9 at the Old State Capitol in Springfield. They can also get their envelopes and stamps cancelled at a special Lincoln's Birthday cancellation by the U.S. Postal Service on February 12 at the Old State Capitol. Envelopes will be sold at the Old State Capitol both days, as well as the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library on February 12.

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“The envelopes, new postage stamps and special cancellation on February 12 offer the chance to obtain unique, one-of-a-kind mementoes of the Lincoln Bicentennial,” said IALBC Chair Marilyn Kushak.

The IALBC and the Illinois State Board of Education launched the envelope design contest in August as a way to involve artists of all ages in the upcoming 200th birthday celebration for Abraham Lincoln.

Abraham Lincoln had several ties to the Postal Service. He was Postmaster at New Salem, the log village where he lived for six years before moving to Springfield. While in Congress, Lincoln served on the committee that oversaw post roads (roads used to deliver mail) and post offices. And President Lincoln’s Postmaster General, Montgomery Blair, made significant improvements to the postal system, including the beginning of free home delivery.

The Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission is working closely with numerous organizations, tourism agencies and institutions in 2008 and 2009 to organize events and programming for the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s birth. The commission is also partnering with local communities on their bicentennial plans. Visit www.lincoln200.net.

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