



Jay Dardenne was born on February 6, 1954 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana to the late John Dardenne, Sr., and Janet Abramson Dardenne. He graduated from Baton Rouge High School in 1972, Louisiana State University in 1976, and the LSU Law School in 1979. Mr. Dardenne has been married to Cathy McDonald Dardenne for more than 30 years. They have two adult children, John and Matthew.

He has been the chairman or president of ten non-profit entities in the Baton Rouge area and has hosted the Jerry Lewis Telethon for the Muscular Dystrophy Association for more than 30 years.

His presentation “Why Louisiana Ain’t Mississippi” has entertained and educated audiences across the state. He has delivered more than 500 speeches in almost every parish of the state on Louisiana history, politics, music and movies. Mr. Dardenne felt an unmistakable calling to serve the state he loves. At the age of 34, he was elected to the East Baton Rouge Parish Metropolitan Council. His accomplishments on the Metro Council included authoring a flood protection ordinance in 1989 which has stood the test of time and prevented any new house constructed since its enactment from sustaining flood damage resulting from a storm or hurricane.

After three years on the Metro Council, Dardenne was elected to the Louisiana State Senate in 1991, representing south Baton Rouge in District 16 for 15 years. After the death of Fox McKeithan, he won a special election for Secretary of State in 2006, serving the remainder of the term. He was elected to a full term in 2007, As Secretary of State, Dardenne protected elections after Katrina, worked with other states to prevent voter fraud and created GeauxVote.com and GeauxBiz.com, making registering a business in Louisiana quick and easy. After serving four years as Secretary of State, he was elected Lieutenant Governor in a special election in 2010. He was elected to a full term in 2011.