

September 24, 2009

Dear Fellow Lincolmites at Heart,

Many people born and raised in Lincoln and other parts of Logan County left, but those locales have not left us: in my case, there are two Lincolns that are always in my heart and often on my mind: the town and the man. I have used my expertise in several public service projects to develop and promote Lincoln's history: my community history Web site of Lincoln--including a Web page devoted to the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission of Lincoln, Illinois--, my proposal to erect the historical marker to commemorate Abraham Lincoln's political rally and speech there on October 16, 1858, and my proposal to re-enact that event last fall. I also researched that rally and speech, and wrote the script for the re-enactment. I enjoy seeing history come alive because I am interested in the present and future of Lincoln and Logan County. You will soon have my new proposal for further development of the local Lincoln heritage as an opportunity for social and economic progress.

Today, however, I write to announce another public service project concerning Lincoln and Logan County's development. The online news reports of Mayor Snyder's commendable economic summit, held September 12<sup>th</sup>, demonstrate the need for an ongoing conversation. In my view, that conversation needs to be broadened beyond the leaders in a room. Yesterday I thus created a Facebook group titled "The Pulse of Lincoln and Logan County, Illinois," as an online forum that will enable more current and former residents to enter this ongoing conversation. Here is the purpose statement on the group's homepage: "This group is an experiment in collective brainstorming for improving present conditions and future prospects for Logan County, Illinois, and its seat, Lincoln--the first Lincoln namesake city (founded, 1853). Improvement can be of any kind: economic, political, social, educational, cultural, recreational, etc. This online group is a forum in which both present and former residents are invited to contribute."

The economic summit is the first topic on the discussion board, and there is a link to the page in LincolnDailyNews.com that in turn has links to its series of reports on the summit so that participants can understand its purposes and outcomes. That understanding will enable people to make informed comments and suggestions in the forum. In less than a day, more than 65 people have joined this group, and several have written comments. I respectfully suggest you join this group so you can participate in the discussions or at least monitor them. Your involvement in this group has the potential to serve the common purpose of building a better community.

Here is the link to this group:

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=164502030271&ref=mf>

Local media online reports on Lincoln's economic summit:

[http://archives.lincolndailynews.com/2009/Sep/21/News/today092109\\_e6.shtml](http://archives.lincolndailynews.com/2009/Sep/21/News/today092109_e6.shtml)

<http://www.lincolncourier.com/news/x1808445480/Lincolns-economy-probed>

Sincerely,

D. Leigh Henson, Ph.D.

Professor emeritus of English

Missouri State University, Springfield

<http://english.missouristate.edu/faculty/henson.html>

[dlhenson@missouristate.edu](mailto:dlhenson@missouristate.edu)

Honorary member of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission of Lincoln, Illinois

<http://www.geocities.com/findinglincolnillinois/abes200th-lincolnil.html>