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Knox College scholars noted in The Wall Street Journal

'Presidents Day Reading List'

The Register-Mail

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GALESBURG — Books about Abraham Lincoln by Knox College scholars occupy two of the top five spots in a "Presidents Day Reading List" in The Wall Street Journal.

The two books are "Honor's Voice," by Douglas L. Wilson, about Lincoln's rise to prominence in Illinois; and the new edition of the famous Lincoln biography, "Herndon's Lincoln," co-edited by Wilson and Rodney O. Davis. Wilson and Davis are co-directors of the Lincoln Studies Center at Knox College.

The books were selected by historian and Lincoln biographer Michael Burlingame for a "Presidents Day Reading List — Best Five Books on Abraham Lincoln," published Saturday in "The Wall Street Journal." Lincoln's birthday was Feb. 12, and Presidents Day was Monday.

Burlingame is professor of history at the University of Illinois-Springfield and author of a new biography, "Abraham Lincoln: A Life," which recently won the 2010 Abraham Lincoln Prize. The prize, which includes the largest award in the field of history, is given annually for the best book on Lincoln and Lincoln's era.

Burlingame praised "Honor's Voice" for "paying careful attention to primary sources. Wilson brings a fresh eye to this comprehensive view of Lincoln's path to maturity." Wilson's book also won Lincoln Prize in 1999.

In "Herndon's Lincoln," Burlingame writes, "Davis and Wilson have meticulously edited and annotated the most influential biography of Lincoln ever written." The book was originally published in 1889 by William Herndon — Lincoln's law partner in Springfield. Davis and Wilson published their new edition in 2006.

Davis is Szold Professor Emeritus of History at Knox. Wilson is George A. Lawrence Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of English. As co-directors of the Lincoln Studies Center, they have written or edited several of the most noted books of Lincoln scholarship in the past decade.

The other books in Burlingame's "Presidents Day Reading List" are "The Young Eagle," by Kenneth J. Winkle; "Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Keckley," by Jennifer Fleischnner; and "Lincoln's Melancholy," by Joshua Wolf Shenk.

Burlingame is a member of the Lincoln Studies Center Board of Advisers. The center has the full version of his new book on its Web site because the text was too long for the print edition

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