



March 2022
Volume 16, Issue 7

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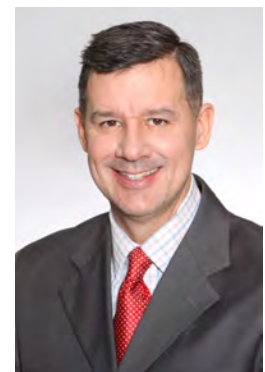
Presentation by Michael Wilkos on March 3 **“Considering Racism and How It Shaped Central Ohio Neighborhoods”**

Although Columbus and the central Ohio region are outperforming every other Midwestern metropolis in terms of population growth and economic expansion, some parts of the region are thriving while other areas struggle. In his Torch paper on March 3, Michael Wilkos will focus on the social, racial and economic landscape of Columbus and how past policies contribute to current conditions.

Michael brings to the topic his long experience as a grant-maker focused on investments in vulnerable families and challenged neighborhoods. He also studies closely the changing demographic trends in central Ohio.

“Like hundreds of other cities in America, Columbus was redlined,” Michael reports. “This practice of denying access to financial tools and loans was determined by completing surveys of both physical and social characteristics of neighborhoods. Redlining set in motion a pattern of investment in some areas at the expense of those that scored low. Subsequent policies like highway construction, slum clearance and construction of public housing were then deployed in these neighborhoods with low scores. The policy of redlining ended with the 1968 Fair Housing Act, and yet 54 years later the impacts of this policy and others like it continue to shape where and how we live.”

Wilkos will examine how past policies have shaped urban geographies. “By more fully understanding what is driving rapidly increasing housing costs, gentrification, displacement, and access to social services helps us to build a more equitable future,” he says.



Michael Wilkos

Biography of Michael Wilkos

Michael Wilkos is senior vice president of community impact at United Way of Central Ohio. His team develops effective strategies to improve the Columbus area and invests in programs provided by more

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Biography of Michael Wilkos

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than 80 funded nonprofit partners to implement these strategies. United Way of Central Ohio is focused on supporting the most vulnerable people in the community through investments in meeting basic needs and achieving student success.

Prior to joining United Way, Michael was director of community research at The Columbus Foundation. During his tenure at the foundation, he initiated, led, and managed competitive grant-making to support holistic community revitalization in Weinland Park, an effort to stabilize and revitalize a mixed-income community near The Ohio State University. Additionally, he provided direction and management for many categories of grant-making at the foundation.

Prior to joining foundation, Michael served as senior impact director and director of neighborhood development at United Way of Central Ohio. In that position he managed program allocations supporting neighborhood development strategies. Among many other duties, he also directed volunteer involvement in developing and implementing strategies supporting housing and community safety programs.

Michael earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in geography and a Master of City and Regional Planning degree from Ohio State. He has served on many boards including the Columbus and Franklin County Continuum of Care which oversees programs funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to respond to homelessness, Franklin County Community Economic Development Advisory Board, United Neighborhood Centers of America, and Columbus Landmarks Foundation.

He makes frequent presentations on topics ranging from neighborhood revitalization, poverty, economic mobility, segregation, redlining, gentrification, history and demographics. He joined the Columbus Torch Club at the meeting in January.

Torch Club schedules June meeting to replace February meeting

The Torch Club's February meeting was canceled due to the severe snow and ice storm. Professor Rattan Lal, who was scheduled to speak at that meeting, has agreed to make his presentation on Thursday, April 7. His topic is "Agriculture as a Source and Solution to Climate Change."

To replace the February meeting, the Torch Club Board of Directors agreed to schedule a Torch meeting on Thursday, June 2, at the Faculty Club. Susan Tilgner had originally been scheduled to deliver her Torch paper, "Talkin' Trash: From Waste to Resources," at the April meeting. Instead, she will present her paper on June 2.

Contact the Fellowship Committee if you need a ride to Torch meetings

If any Torch Club member needs a ride to a monthly Torch meeting, or if you are willing to provide transportation for a member, please contact the club's Fellowship Committee. You may reach the Fellowship Committee through its chair, Diane Selby, at (614) 571-4226 and Dianeselby@gmail.com. To help arrange transportation, you also may contact any member of the Fellowship Committee: Joe Blundo, Jeff Caswell, Tom Davison, Joan Leitzel, John Litchfield and Constance Oulanoff.

New options for club members not attending Torch due to COVID

Although most Torch Club members have attended the in-person monthly meetings that resumed last October, there are a few members who have been reluctant to attend in person due to ongoing concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic. These members or persons in their households may be at greater risk for the illness for a variety of reasons.

As a result, the Torch Club at its March 3 meeting will set aside an area of socially distanced seating for members particularly concerned about COVID-19. This will permit them to hear the Torch paper. In addition, the Faculty Club will prepare a take-home dinner for these members. If you require a take-home dinner, please indicate that in your RSVP to Thom Seelbach's monthly Evite.

The Torch Club board will evaluate this option after the March meeting to determine whether it is feasible to continue it for future meetings. Meanwhile, all visitors to the Faculty Club continue to be required to wear masks, except when eating.

Former Torch member Hal Stevens passed away in January

Harold M. "Hal" Stevens, long-time arts advocate and entrepreneur, died on January 17 at the age of 89. Born and raised in Cincinnati, he graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University. Early in his career, he established a graphic design studio. He later established the Ohio Craft Museum, Ohio Designer Craftsmen Enterprises, and four "A Show of Hands" retail craft stores in Ohio. He was the founder and director for 24 years of the Columbus Winterfair. Hal was a founding member of the Greater Columbus Arts Council and former president of the Liturgical Arts League of Ohio and of Ohio Designer Craftsmen. He joined the Columbus Torch Club in 2002.

Hal is survived by his wife JoAnn, two daughters and a granddaughter. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

IATC Convention will be in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., in June

The Saratoga Torch Club will host the 2022 Torch Convention in its historic hometown of Saratoga Springs, N.Y., from June 16-19. The city dates back to the mid-18th century and is adjacent to the site of the 1777 Saratoga Battles of the Revolutionary War. The convention will be in the Holiday Inn Saratoga Springs, an upscale, centrally located hotel. Nearby are quaint downtown shops and Congress Park with its own mineral springs, antique carousel, and historic Canfield Casino and Saratoga Museum.

The convention includes Torch presentations, a club development workshop, a club management panel to support local leadership practices, IATC business meetings exciting tours. Choices include the cottage where Ulysses Grant spent his final days, the Saratoga National Historic Park with its battlefields and visitor center, a cruise on Lake George, and a trolley tour of Saratoga Springs. The traditional gala and award-winning Paxton Paper presentation will cap off the convention on Saturday evening.

The website for the International Association of Torch Clubs has more detail and has links to the convention registration form and the registration form for the hotel, which has offered our block of rooms at half price. There are also Torch Foundation grant applications to support attendance at the convention which may apply to your situation. Go to www.torch.org.

Responding to the Evite from Secretary Seelbach

Club secretary Thom Seelbach will send you via electronic mail an Evite to attend the Torch Club meeting on March 3. Respond promptly to the Evite so he will have an accurate count of meals needed. You also may respond to him at tseelbach@gmail.com or (614) 499-3090.

The directions for responding to the Evite are:

1. After you click on the email from Evite, it will bring up a new window on the Evite website. You must click your response in this new window for Evite to register your response.
2. The guest count is the actual number of attendees. If only you are attending, the count will be 1. The cost for a guest is \$30. A potential member may attend one dinner meeting without charge.

Schedule of Torch Club speakers and their papers for 2021-22

October 7, 2021: **“It’s Not Your Grandmother’s Nursing”** by Elizabeth Lenz

November 4, 2021: **“The Harlan Brothers in Black and White: Justice John Marshall Harlan, U.S. Supreme Court and Rep. Robert James Harlan, Ohio House of Representatives”** by Violet Meek

December 2, 2021: **The Ohio State University Men’s Glee Club**, Robert Ward, Director

January 6, 2022: **“How Do Women and Men Differ in Their Work and Careers?”** by Francille Firebaugh

February 3, 2022: Weather-related cancelation

March 3, 2022: **“Considering Racism and How It Shaped Central Ohio Neighborhoods”** by

Michael Wilkos

April 7, 2022: **“Agriculture as a Source and Solution to Climate Change”** by Rattan Lal

May 5, 2022: **“Celebrating Sparky – Charles Schultz and Peanuts”** by Lucy Caswell

June 2, 2022: **“Talkin’ Trash: From Waste to Resources”** by Susan Tilgner

Torch Club’s monthly meeting agenda

4:30-5:30 p.m. Board of Directors meeting
5:30-6:15 p.m. Cocktails and conversation
6:15-6:35 p.m. Business matters
6:35-7:30 p.m. Speaker
7:30-8:45 p.m. Dinner and table discussion

Board of Directors for Torch Club of Columbus, Ohio, for 2021-22

President – Nancy S. Wardwell

President-elect – Susan Tilgner

Immediate Past President – Susan W. Smith

Secretary – Thom Seelbach

Assistant Secretary – Diane Selby

Treasurer – Howard Gauthier

Assistant Treasurer – David Lenz

Fellowship Chair – Diane Selby

Membership Chair – Dorothy Driskell

Nominating Chair – Susan W. Smith

Newsletter Editor – Steve Sterrett

Website Editor – Rai Goerler

Director-at-Large – Christina Atzberger (2022)

Director-at-Large – Rai Goerler (2022)

Director-at-Large – Paul Niswander (2023)

Director-at-Large – Dorothy Driskell (2023)

IATC Region 5 Director – Elizabeth Short