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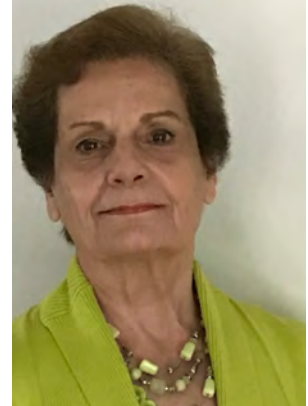
### **Presentation by Violet Meek on May 4** **“Mr. Lincoln’s Newspaper”**

Before Abraham Lincoln became president and the revered statesman following his assassination, he was a shrewd politician. Violet Meek will explore the connections between Lincoln’s presidential ambitions and the power of the press in her paper, “Mr. Lincoln’s Newspaper,” that she will present to the Torch Club of Columbus on Thursday, May 4.

Lincoln purchased the *Illinois Staats-Anzeiger* in 1859. This German-language newspaper circulated in and around his hometown of Springfield, Ill. He also employed the newspaper’s editor, Theodore Canisius, to campaign for him in German-speaking communities. Canisius had immigrated to the United States after the failed revolutions of 1848 and was strongly opposed to slavery.

“Why did an Illinois lawyer and politician decide to buy a newspaper?” Violet asks. “And for that matter, why a newspaper written entirely in German? What historic factors in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century made this a sensible decision for man with presidential ambitions? Surely some of those factors had to do with faster, cheaper, and more accessible means of communication.”

Violet says her Torch paper “will consider the impact of the intertwining of the railroads, the telegraph, and steam-powered newspaper printing on Lincoln’s conduct of his presidency and of the defining event of that presidency, the American Civil War.”



**Violet Meek**

### **Biography of Violet Meek**

Violet Meek has had a varied career as a chemistry professor, academic administrator, leader of a regional campus, and a minister.

An inorganic chemist by training, Violet Meek earned her undergraduate degree from St. Olaf College

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## **Biography of Violet Meek**

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and her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she met her late husband, Devon W. Meek. She joined the faculties at Mount Holyoke College and Ohio Wesleyan University, leaving OWU as professor of chemistry and dean of educational services to become director of annual programs for the Council of Independent Colleges in Washington, D.C.

Violet returned to Columbus and, after a stint at The Ohio State University Research Foundation, became the dean and director of The Ohio State University at Lima. She led the regional campus from 1991 until her first retirement in 2002.

She is now an ordained Lutheran minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She served a congregation in Logan, Ohio, for the next 10 years until attempting, with limited success, to retire again. She has served on the boards of many arts, civic and service organizations, including, most recently, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, the Columbus Rotary Foundation, and the Deaconess Community of the ELCA. She and her husband, Don M. Dell, immediate past president of the Columbus Torch Club, share five adult children and seven grandchildren.

## **President's message: Is Torch Club Thick or Thin?**

Many of you undoubtedly read a recent column by David Brooks in *The New York Times* ("How to Leave a Mark on People," April 18, 2017). In it, Brooks recalls experiences shared with a long-time friend, and he uses the power and lasting significance of those experiences to distinguish between "thick" and "thin" organizations. To paraphrase Brooks, the thin ones are those that are instrumental; you use them to get something you want (a degree, a paycheck, etc.), but they are valuable to you only to the extent that they pay off adequately. By contrast, thick organizations are those that genuinely change you and become part of your identity.



**Jeff Caswell**

If you haven't read the column, I commend it. I won't lay out his whole argument here, but as we come to the end of another program year in Torch Club, it seems worth thinking about what sort of organization we are, and what we want to be. One of the things that many members like about Torch Club is that it doesn't ask for the sort of intense commitment that might characterize many thick organizations. On the other hand, I believe we do have shared values that go beyond just trying to get more out of the club than you put in. I'm not prepared to recommend that we adopt uniforms, challenging initiation processes, rituals, or songs (all of which Brooks notes are sometimes found in thick organizations), though it might be interesting to see what folks would propose. Instead, let's concentrate on improving what we already do best: fellowship and sharing ideas. That may not put us distinctly in either the thick or thin category, but who's counting?

## **IATC Convention will be in Kalamazoo from June 15-17**

The International Association of Torch Clubs will hold its 2017 convention from Thursday, June 15, through Saturday, June 17, at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Kalamazoo, Mich. The local club has arranged a variety of lectures and tours to accompany the convention. The hotel is offering a special rate for rooms booked by May 23. For more on the convention, click on <http://www.Torch2017.webs.com>.

## Member's Moment – Thomas L. Sweeney

*Presented by Lawrence A. Kennedy on April 6, 2017*

Tom Sweeney was born in Cleveland in 1936 (the year before me), which makes him the old man. He was the fourth of seven children born to his Irish immigrant parents. He graduated from West Tech High School and received three degrees in chemical engineering from Case Institute of Technology.

His first job after college was with The Standard Oil Company in Cleveland (old SOHIO) as a process engineer in charge of a petrochemical pilot plant. After that assignment, he moved to the Commercial Development Department at SOHIO'S headquarters.

In 1963, Tom came to Columbus and joined the Department of Chemical Engineering at The Ohio State University. He introduced courses in air pollution control and environmental regulation, areas of special interest to him, and he did the things that faculty are expected to do – teach courses, mentor graduate students, seek research funding, write papers, and, unfortunately, attend committee meetings. Tom also was an active consultant to industry. During this period, he became active with the Newman Center's CCICA, a Catholic discussion group

on social action. Tom was a prominent and active member throughout his OSU affiliations.

In 1982, the newly arrived OSU President, Ed Jennings, established the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, reporting directly to the president. Tom was asked to be the associate vice president for research, a post he held until his retirement in 1994. Tom held other titles at various times during this period: executive director and president of the OSU Research Foundation, president of the OSU Faculty Club, and, on a two-year acting basis, vice president for research and graduate studies, covering the last year of President Jennings' tenure and the first year of Gordon Gee's tenure. They were equally good bosses, but with completely different styles.

After Tom's retirement from OSU, he served the University of Notre Dame for six years as director of its Office of Research and as professor of chemical engineering. Tom kept his hand in at OSU by serving as a consultant to the Research Foundation for first two years of his time in South Bend.

After retiring from Notre Dame and returning to Columbus in 2000, Tom helped out for a couple of years in his academic department, teaching classes and working on the initial phase of planning for a new chemical engineering building. He has served on the board of the OSU Retirees Association for the past 16 years, including a term as president and four as secretary.

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**Lawrence Kennedy (left) presented the Member's Moment for Tom Sweeney on April 6. They served together on the faculty in Ohio State's College of Engineering for a number of years.**

## Member's Moment – Thomas L. Sweeney

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Tom has been a member of St. Timothy parish since 1965. In his younger, more energetic years, he was, at various times, president of its Parish Council, chair of its Finance Committee, a member of its School Board, and an usher.

While a graduate student, Tom met Beverly, an Irish-American girl who grew up in Cleveland, who now is his loving wife of 55 years. Tom feels most blest because of his family, not only in the brothers and sisters of his and of Bev's birth families, but in the family they have created together. They have four sons, Patrick, a lawyer in Pittsburgh, Tom, an oncologist practicing in Columbus, Michael, a partner in a large technology consulting firm working out of Cleveland, and Kevin, a science teacher and a dean at Columbus School for Girls. They enjoy 15 grandchildren, ranging in age from 4 to 28. Keeping up with them is their current full-time occupation and their greatest joy.

Tom has been a member of Torch since 2009 and looks forward to the informative talks, the fine dining at the Faculty Club, and the fellowship of each meeting.

## Nominations Committee proposes slate of officers for 2017-18

The club's Nominations Committee, chaired by immediate past president Don Dell, will present the following slate of club officers for 2017-18 at the club's meeting on May 4:

President – Rich Davis

President-elect – **Tom Costantiello**

Immediate Past President – Jeff Caswell

Secretary – Thom Seelbach

Assistant Secretary – Susan W. Smith

Treasurer – Howard Gauthier

Assistant Treasurer – **Susan Tilgner**

Newsletter Editor – Steve Sterrett

At-large Members –

Violet Meek (continuing; her term ends in 2018)

**Deborah Stevens** (completes Pat Smith's term ending in 2018)

**Dorothy Driskell** (term ends in 2019)

**Richard Meyer** (term ends in 2019)

The names in **bold** print are proposed for election by the membership at the club's May meeting. The others are either continuing in a multiple-year elected position or are board appointments that don't require a vote of the members. Nominations may be made from the floor.

## Volunteer needed to create website for Columbus Torch Club

The Columbus Torch Club is interested in having a relatively simple website with information about the club, Torch papers, and monthly newsletters. Steve Sterrett, editor of *The Torch Lighter*, is willing to maintain and update content on the website once it is created. If a club member or other volunteer is willing to create the website, please contact Steve at (614) 262-4586 or [sterrett.1@osu.edu](mailto:sterrett.1@osu.edu).



**The Columbus Torch Club has met in Ohio State's Faculty Club building since it opened in 1939.**

## 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 May 4. 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) 457-5103.

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 to attend the meeting and dinner is \$30.

## Schedule of Torch Club speakers and their papers for 2016-17

Thursday, October 6, 2016

**“The Gifted, Resiliency, and Brain Plasticity”** by Bruce Kline and Elizabeth Short

Thursday, November 3, 2016

**“Stevenson’s Dentist – Unsung Hero”** by Robert Stevenson

Thursday, December 1, 2016

**“Seasonal Music from the Old and New Worlds”** performed by the Early Interval

Thursday, January 5, 2017

**“Marketing Opportunities to Improve Sorghum Farmers’ Incomes in East Africa”** by Don Larson

Thursday, February 2, 2017

**“Hey, Bernie! No, No!”** By Thomas Atzberger

Thursday, March 2, 2017

**“The Roots of Audiology”** by Paul Niswander

Thursday, April 6, 2017

**“Is There Honor in Honor Societies?”** by Diane Selby

Thursday, May 4, 2017

**“Mr. Lincoln’s Newspaper”** by Violet Meek

### **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 presents Torch paper

7:30-8:45 p.m. Dinner and table discussion

Meetings are conducted in The Ohio State University Faculty Club, 181 S. Oval Drive; (614) 292-2262.

## Board of Directors of Torch Club of Columbus, Ohio, for 2016-17

President – Jeff Caswell

President-Elect – Rich Davis

Past President – Don Dell

Secretary – Thomas M. Seelbach

Assistant Secretary – Susan Warren Smith

Treasurer – Howard Gauthier

Assistant Treasurer – Tom Costantiello

Membership Chair – Dorothy E. Driskell

Fellowship Chair – Violet Meek

Nominating Chair – Don Dell

Newsletter Editor – Stephen A. Sterrett

Director-at-Large – Violet Meek (2018)

Director-at-Large – Pat Smith (2018)

Director-at-Large – Dorothy Driskell (2017)

Director-at-Large – Stephen A. Sterrett (2017)