



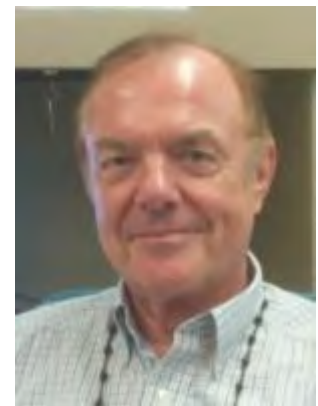
**November 2023**  
**Volume 18, Issue 3**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Biography of David Hansen.....	2
Mail your check for the club’s dues or bring check to November meeting.....	2
Member’s Moment: Bill LaFayette.....	3
President’s message: Suggestions welcomed for Torch papers.....	4
IATC creates Centennial Club to support the future of Torch.....	4
Responding to the Evite from Secretary Seelbach.....	5
Schedule of Torch Club speakers and their papers for 2023-24.....	5
Board of Directors of the Torch Club of Columbus, Ohio, for 2023-24.....	5

### **Presentation by David Hansen on November 2** **“Land-Grant Contributions to Foreign Policy”**

David Hansen, a member of the Torch Club since 2014, will bring his decades of involvement in international programs in higher education to bear in his Torch paper on November 2 about universities and U.S. foreign policy. The paper’s title is “Land-Grant Contributions to Foreign Policy.” David is professor emeritus of rural sociology in The Ohio State University’s College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.



**David Hansen**

“Universities consistently inform foreign policy, primarily through specialized centers,” David explains. At Ohio State, they include area studies centers, such as the Latin American Studies Center and the Middle East Studies Center, and topically focused centers, such as the Mershon Center for International Strategic Studies.

“Less well known are important contributions made by land-grant colleges of agriculture following World War II,” he recounts. “The Cold War, which persisted through the second half of the past century, presented multiple challenges to the U.S. Department of State and its Western allies as they competed with the Soviet Union and China. The latter were focused on expanding their socialist authoritarian models to non-aligned nations. Early in this process, the U.S. government approached U.S. land-grant universities to assist in countering their efforts.”

Numerous nations in Latin America, South and East Asia, and Africa suffered from recurrent episodes of famine and hunger. Their economies were primarily agrarian, so agriculture became a primary focus of this initiative.

David points out that national leadership of the land-grant university community was heavily involved in the definition and initial implementation of these efforts. Ohio State became involved along with many of its counterpart institutions during the 1950s and 1960s. Over the decades that followed, it worked with higher education and research partner institutions overseas to help strengthen their capacity to promote agricultural development. These partnerships existed on three continents and were long-term

in nature. They involved long- and short-term assignments by Ohio State faculty at these partner institutions and the long- and short-term training of their professionals at Ohio State.

“Of particular interest is the story of a partnership in Northeast India with the Punjab Agricultural University which began during the 1950s and which has persisted to this day,” he says. “I will describe the evolution of this partnership and the multiple mutual benefits accruing from it.

“This engagement of our land-grant universities represented an important contribution to U.S. foreign policy, generating substantial good will towards the United States and important economic development outputs in non-aligned nations as typified by the Punjab Agricultural University, which is a regional engine of economic growth in India. The story of this partnership is related as an example of how these partnerships evolved over time.”

## **Biography of David Hansen**

Upon completing his undergraduate studies at Notre Dame, David Hansen joined the Peace Corps and served for two years in Bolivia. He then completed a doctoral program in the sociology of development at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Over the following decade, he lived and worked in Brazil for nearly seven years in positions associated with the University of Wisconsin and The Ohio State University.

After becoming a full professor of rural sociology at the Ohio State in 1986, he was appointed as associate dean and director of international programs in agriculture, a position that he held until his retirement in 2008. During his tenure, he was responsible for numerous research, academic and outreach programs encompassing five continents. In addition to addressing the needs of populations in these regions, these programs were used to prepare faculty, students, and stakeholders to live and compete in a globalized world.

From 1983 to 1986, David was stationed in Washington, D.C., as a member of the Joint Career Corps with the U.S. Agency of International Development in its Bureau of Science and Technology where he focused on creating and implementing programs related to land grant university engagement in overseas assistance programs. From 2008 to 2012, he returned to Washington, D.C., as a senior fellow at the Association for Public and Land Grant Universities where he helped create and implement a program of higher education partnerships between U.S. and African universities.

Over his career he has received significant university, national and international awards for his important contributions to university-related international programs.

## **Mail your check for the club's dues or bring check to November meeting**

The Torch Club's Board of Directors set the dues for the 2023-24 program year at \$360 for one person, if paid by November 2. After that date, the dues are \$375. Dues for two persons in a household are \$670. If paid after November 2, household dues are \$700. The charge to bring a guest to the club's meetings is \$35. (You may invite a potential member to one club meeting at no charge.)

To pay your dues, please write a check to “Torch Club of Columbus.” Mail your check to the club's treasurer, David Lenz, at 1926 Lake Shore Drive, Columbus, OH 43204. You also may bring your check to the Torch meeting on November 2.

## Member's Moment: Bill LaFayette

*Presented by Joe Blundo on October 5*

I have the daunting task of summarizing Bill LaFayette in three minutes. To prepare, I met Bill for coffee and asked him half a million questions. You should, too. He knows a lot.

He's a regional economist, meaning he specializes in the economy of one area: Our area. He's an authority on what makes our economy tick — or not. Contrary to popular belief, Bill tells me, the central Ohio economy is not recession-proof. Nor is it mainly driven by state government and Ohio State University, although they are significant contributors. The things you learn from talking to Bill.

Bill was born in Springfield, Ohio. His father was a photographer for the International Harvester Company; his mother was a schoolteacher. Being resourceful people, they built their own house, the one Bill grew up in.

As a child, he was an avid stamp collector and lover of history. He was also a music fan, although not of the 1960s rock that his peers adored. He was turned on by the "1812 Overture." He's still a fan with eclectic tastes. Ask him about British big bands of the 1930s and 1940s or 20th-century concert music or ballet music.

Bill was attracted to economics and finance while in high school. He earned an undergraduate degree in finance and accounting and an MBA in investment management from Wright State University. His Ph.D in real estate economics was granted by Ohio State.

He has taught on the faculty of the University of North Texas and at Ashland University. Bill spent four years working for the Rickenbacker Port Authority and 12 with the Columbus Chamber of Commerce. In 2011, he founded his consulting company, Regionomics.

When I asked Bill who had a major influence on his career, he said Bill Burns, a former newspaper reporter who was vice president of marketing for the chamber.

Bill said Burns encouraged him to write less like an academic and more like a journalist. He stressed the need to answer two questions for the reader: *What's in it for me?* and *So what?* Bill now stresses the same things when he teaches classes at the John Glenn College of Public Affairs at OSU.

Why does he do what he does? Bill says understanding a local economy gives him the opportunity to improve people's lives. For example, he recently completed a study of the economy of the South Side of Columbus. From it, he concluded that many people working in low-paying service and retail industry jobs could, with just some training, move into higher-paying positions in our city.

"Just calling attention to that and giving people hope . . . it's really gratifying," he said.



**Joe Blundo (left) presented Bill LaFayette for the Member's Moment.**

Bill and his husband, Ron Templin, live in Lockbourne. They've been together since long before it was possible for them to legally marry in Ohio. Of course, that all changed with a U.S. Supreme Court ruling announced at 10 a.m. on June 26, 2015. By noon that same day, Bill and Ron were at the Franklin County Courthouse securing a marriage license.

The two met online. Ron was struck by a quote Bill included in his profile. It's been attributed to the Quaker missionary Etienne de Grellet. It says, "I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

And that should tell you something about Bill LaFayette.

## **President's message: Suggestions welcomed for Torch papers**

Why did you renew your membership in (or join) the Torch Club of Columbus? Some of you will answer that you enjoy dinner at the OSU Faculty Club. Others will point to the opportunity for fellowship. Many, I hope, will say that they look forward to the educational and informational programs that precede dinner.

Last year, when I was president-elect, my responsibility was to compile the programs for the next year. I put together a committee that included members of the board and people from the general membership. We met once or twice in person before the dinner meeting. Most of our business, however, we accomplished through emails. We began in January and had a complete program by the end of March.



**Rai Goerler**

If you are interested in participating in this process, please contact me at Goerler.1@osu.edu or Don Larson, our new president-elect, at Larson.4@osu.edu. If you would like to be a speaker or can recommend someone or a topic, we want to hear from you!

Finally, the board is very interested in your views of our programming in general. Would you like to have one meeting (say, in January or February) in a Zoom format rather than meet in person? Should we drop the meeting in January or February entirely and have one in June? Let me know. Your opinion matters and is critical as we plan for 2024-2025. Look for an email survey on this topic from Steve Sterrett.

I look forward to seeing you on November 2.

## **IATC creates Centennial Club to support the future of Torch**

To celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024 of the founding of Torch, the International Association of Torch Clubs has created the Centennial Club as part of the Torch Foundation. You may join the Centennial Club with a donation of as little as \$100 to the Torch Foundation. All donations will be dedicated to increasing membership in existing clubs and to developing new clubs. IATC hopes to raise \$100,000 to help ensure the future of Torch. You can find more information on the IATC website at <https://www.torch.org/centennial-club.html>.

## 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 November 2. 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 \$35. A potential member may attend one dinner meeting without charge.

If you need a ride to a Torch meeting or are willing to provide transportation, please contact the club's Fellowship Committee through its chair, Diane Selby, at (614) 571-4226 and Dianeselby@gmail.com.

## Schedule of Torch Club speakers and their papers for 2022-23

October 5, 2023: **“Morocco: Expectations and Surprises”** by Mary Beth Wise, associate professor emeritus, Department of Internal Medicine, Ohio State

November 2, 2023: **“Land Grant Contributions to Foreign Policy”** by David Hansen, professor emeritus, International Program in Agriculture, Ohio State

December 7, 2023: **Holiday Music** with the Grandview High School Chorus

January 4, 2024: **“Cemeteries, Genealogy...Gone but not Forgotten”** by Kent Birmingham, CPA

February 1, 2024: **“Recent Advances in Medicine Part II - Focused on selected specific disease treatments”** by Gary Hinzman, M.D.

March 7, 2024: **“Buckeye Tailgate Party”** by Trevor Zahara, author of *Buckeye Tailgate* and *Confessions of an OSU Usher*

April 4, 2024: **“Walking Each Other Home: Ram Dass, Psychedelics and the Trip of a Lifetime”** by the Rev. Dr. Susan Warren Smith, PCUSA clergy (retired), and Ann Wallingford

May 2, 2024: **“How does Psychotherapy Work? Clearing the Way for Success”** by Anne Croskey, Ph.D. and LCDC-III

## Board of Directors for Torch Club of Columbus, Ohio, for 2023-24

President – Rai Goerler

President-elect – Donald Larson

Immediate Past President – Susan Tilgner

Secretary – Thom Seelbach

Assistant Secretary – Diane Selby

Treasurer – David Lenz

Assistant Treasurer – vacant

Fellowship Chair – Diane Selby

Membership Chair – Dorothy Driskell

Nominating Chair – Susan Tilgner

Region 5 Director – Nancy Wardwell

Newsletter Editor – Steve Sterrett

Website Editor – Rai Goerler

Director-at-Large – Christina Atzberger (2024)

Director-at-Large – David Hansen (2024)

Director-at-Large – Paul Niswander (2025)

Director-at-Large – Dorothy Driskell (2025)