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Presentation by Mary Beth Wise on October 5 **“Morocco: Expectations and Surprises”**

Mary Beth Wise will bring her passion for travel to the Columbus Torch Club when she starts our new program year on Thursday, October 5, with her Torch paper, “Morocco: Expectations and Surprises.” The cocktail hour will begin at 5:30 p.m. at The Ohio State University Faculty Club with the program starting about 6:15 p.m.

Mary Beth is a retired faculty member in Ohio State University’s College of Medicine. “Since my retirement, I have been exploring the world to learn about other countries – their history, culture, customs, geography and architecture,” she explains. “Other travelers raved about Morocco, and I was finally able to visit in October 2022 after several delays due to COVID.”



Mary Beth Wise

Morocco is an Islamic state and a constitutional monarchy. The population is 98 percent Muslim. The country was largely settled starting in the eighth century by Arabic Bedouin tribes from the east and by Berber nomadic tribes from south of the high Atlas Mountains. Many dynasties established cities with the capital moving among Rabat, Meknes, Fes and Marrakech from the eighth to the 18th centuries. Spain and France influenced Moroccan life considerably over the centuries. Morocco was a French protectorate from 1912 to 1956, so French influence on current culture is particularly evident. Ties with the U.S. are substantial and long lasting.

“The people adhere to the five pillars of Islam and interpret the Quran very differently from the Middle Eastern Arab states that we hear so much about – Islamic terrorists, ruthless dictatorships who violate human rights,” Mary Beth reports. “Male domination predominates, much more so in the rural and mountainous areas than in the cities of Rabat, Fes and Marrakesh. We spent considerable time interacting with locals in the cities, the plains, the Sahara desert, and mountains learning about their

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Presentation by Mary Beth Wise

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cultures.” She notes that her travels included the areas hardest hit by the earthquake in Morocco on September 8.

“My expectations of experiencing the culture in the medinas (old towns), riads (residences), souks (markets), Kasbahs (fortresses) and ksars (Berber walled villages) were exceeded. The tile work of the mosques, palaces, and Koranic schools over many centuries was breathtaking. Morocco is also famous for textiles, carpets, leather, pottery, metal work and food. My concern about spicy food was not realized. I did get tired of couscous, tagines, and green tea!”

Biography of Mary Beth Fontana Wise

Mary Beth Fontana Wise, a member of the Torch Club since 2009, is retired from the faculty of the Department of Internal Medicine in the Division of Cardiovascular Diseases at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. She obtained her undergraduate degree and medical degree from Ohio State and did her post-graduate training at the University of North Carolina and Ohio State.

Mary Beth is past director of the medical college’s Independent Study Program and past block co-leader of the Cardiopulmonary Block in the Lead Serve Inspire Curriculum. She is the Harry C. and Elizabeth Powelson Professor Emeritus of Medicine dedicated to tutoring and mentoring medical students. She has received more than 20 teaching awards including Professor of the Year from the medical students, Distinguished Educator Award from the College of Medicine, Alumni Teaching and Achievement Awards from College of Medicine, and the Lifetime Teaching Award from the College of Medicine.

She retired so that she could spend her time teaching medical students, enjoying her family, traveling and pursuing her hobbies, especially photography. She belongs to travel and photography groups and has given many talks on her travels.

Please bring check for club’s dues to Torch meeting on October 5

At its meeting in August, the club’s Board of Directors set the dues for the 2023-24 program year. Dues for one person are \$360 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.

To pay your dues, please bring a check written to “Torch Club of Columbus” to the first Torch Club meeting on October 5. If you are unable to make payment at that time, you may mail your check after October 13 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.

IATC holds “fireside chat” on October 15

The International Association of Torch Clubs will hold one of its periodic “fireside chats” on Sunday, October 15, for club members across the United States and Canada. The chat over Zoom will begin at 3 p.m. Eastern time.



President's message: Join us for a new year of Torch

I am looking forward to kicking off the new season of Columbus Torch on October 5.

Our first speaker, Mary Beth Wise, will talk about a very timely topic: Morocco. Sadly, Morocco has been in the news because of the terrible earthquake, and this will be an opportunity for us to learn more about this interesting country. I toured there last fall and my travel group visited the vibrant city of Marrakech. I remember the crowds in the enormous city square, the countless number of stalls for shopping and dining, and the snake charmers. (In fact, I argued with a snake charmer who wanted to charge me twice the agreed fee because he took two photos when I asked for one.)



Rai Goerler

The meeting will also be noteworthy for the election of leaders of our club. Traditionally, that takes place in May, but not this year. Members will hear the nominations from the nominating committee for positions of president-elect and directors-at-large. You will have the opportunity to nominate others if you wish.

October is also a great time to pay dues and save money. In my message for September, I explained at length why the dues had to be increased. (As your new president, I felt especially awkward to announce this, like a recently elected legislator whose first act is to vote to increase your taxes!) Still, the board did provide a discount of \$15 (\$360 vs. \$375 for individuals; \$670 vs. \$700 for households of two) for those who paid dues before November 2. So save some money by bringing a check on October 5.

Finally, I did have communications with Lee Hill about Dick Hill. Dick wanted to have no memorials in honor of his life and services. So we will respect the wishes of the family, but a moment of silence would be appropriate.

I look forward to seeing you on October 5 and to learning of any ideas you have, especially if they can enhance our programs or add to our membership. Feel free to contact me at goerler.1@osu.edu.

Members will vote on club's candidates at October meeting

The club's Nominating Committee has nominated Donald W. Larson, a Torch Club member since 2012, for the position of president-elect for the 2023-24 program year. Don is a professor emeritus of agricultural, environment and development economics at Ohio State. If elected, he will serve one year as president-elect and then become president for the 2024-25 program year.

The committee also is nominating Paul Niswander and Dorothy E. Driskell for additional two-year terms as directors-at-large. If elected, their new terms would end in mid-2025.

The club's membership will vote to fill these three offices at the meeting on October 5. President Rai Goerler will accept additional nominations from the floor at that time. The offices of secretary, assistant secretary, treasurer and assistant treasurer serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors.

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 October 5. 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, psychologist

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

President – Rai Goerler

President-elect – vacant

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 (2023)

Director-at-Large – Dorothy Driskell (2023)