

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (8 January 2014)

President John Vincenti called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m. Art introduced Louise Goldschmidt and his friend, Bob Ritzmann (a potential member). Dean Snow introduced Michael Hecht, a distinguished professor of communication arts and sciences at Penn State, for membership. Lee Stout moved that he be admitted; the vote in favor was unanimous. John Vincenti, who has worked with SCORE (Small Business Counseling) for more than seven years, gave an informative lecture on "Small Business Pitfalls."

Attendance: 13 of whom 10 were members and one was voted in. Next month's Torch Paper, by Dick Held, will be on "Current Conditions in Mexico's Economy" (a topic change what is in the brochure).

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (12 FEBRUARY 2014)

President John Vincenti called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. and asked all members present to introduce themselves. Treasurer Lee Stout being away, Cliff Bastuscheck reported that the club's books are in order. The secretary reminded the members that the next IATC convention will take place in St Catharines, Ont., from 18 to 21 June and that he and the president plan to attend. John added that he will send every member an announcement of next month's talk with an attachment to our new website.

Dick Held spoke on "Why Are the Business Experts so Excited about Mexico?" The country now has one-third as many citizens as the US, one-fifth its per capita income, spends \$700 per capita on healthcare compared with \$8,000 in the US, and its citizens have a life expectancy at birth of 75, while the US figure is 80. Although crime, drug-lords ("Narcos"), poverty, and public education are negative features, Mexico has a bright future. Nine million people in Mexico City (21 million in its metropolitan area) are thriving; poverty is vanishing. Mexico's assets include its infrastructure, notably roads and airports, air quality, the leadership of its newly elected President Enrique Peña Nieto, its auto manufacturing industry, NAFTA membership, influx of Asian manufacturing facilities, and a relatively low national debt. Mexico's political system resembles that of the US, except that the president has one six-year term. Its three major parties are the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) that is currently in power, the National Action Party (PAN), which held power for twelve years, and the leftist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). Some factories have moved from China to Mexico to be nearer the large US market, notably Samsung, so Mexico now ranks second as a supplier of electronics. The auto industry is growing, with \$15 billion investment planned in the next five years, and Mexico's annual hourly labor cost is \$7.80, compared with \$45 in the US and above \$50 in some European countries. Mexico now has more engineering students than the US, but the average engineer earns only one-third as much as his American counterpart. GE, GM, Honeywell, and Delphi have lately opened research and development centers in the country.

Dick, a frequent visitor to the country, cited Queretaro state and city as models for modern Mexico. The Bombardier firm that makes Learjets moved there in 2005, and it is also home to GE and Samsung. It has a new airport, a 12-lane highway connecting it to Mexico City, and the second largest shopping mall in Latin America. Americans living in Mexico see the drug problem as an American one, for 90 percent of its narcotics go to the US. For 75 years Pemex was Mexico's state-owned oil monopoly, paying \$60 billion as taxes and royalties to the government, but it was inefficient, lacked capital and know-how for development, and its output peaked in 2010. Now the state will let foreign oil companies explore for new sources; and he predicts that oil production may double by 2017 to 5 million barrels per day. Public education is weak due to a powerful and corrupt teachers' union; private schools serve wealthy Mexicans and have high standards. Many teach in English half the time; in Spanish the other half. As for taxation, 60 percent of all Mexicans pay no income tax, and the state just raised the value-added tax to 16 percent, adding sodas to taxable items because Mexicans are growing obese. Loopholes in the income tax and evasion of the VAT decrease Mexican government revenue, which is the lowest of the world's 34 most developed countries. Personal security is a problem; on average 75 kidnappings occur daily, companies secretly carry "ransom insurance" on their employees, and the legal system is corrupt and inefficient. Only one crime out of ten gets reported, and the courts get two convictions per hundred complaints. One bribes the policeman who gives one a ticket. More police are hired by municipalities than by the federal government. Vigilantes abound. Rich Mexicans and business firms spend heavily on guard dogs and private security. Carlos Slim (the son of two Lebanese parents) was the world's richest man from 2010 to 2013 because he owned Mexico's mobile telephone company as a monopoly, charging rates 40 percent above those charged in the US, but a new law limits his firm to a 50 percent market share, part of its policy to raise competitiveness, lower prices, and improve the quality of service. Dick gives Mexico's economy has an 80 percent chance of success due to its strong leadership, rising oil production, improving education, and a growing middle class. Members asked questions about Chinese industry, emigration of Mexicans to the US, trade with other Latin American countries, and the high crime rate. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m. 14 members attended.

Respectfully submitted, Art Goldschmidt, secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (12 March 2014)

President John Vincenti, acknowledging the presence of a guest who may become a member, opened our dinner by asking each member and guest present to introduce himself or herself and identify sports they have played or like to watch, a gambit that helped all of us learn more about our fellow members. It also facilitated mealtime conversations. He called the formal meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. and let us know that he will attend the IATC Convention in St Catharine's this June. Tom Berner's photos are now on exhibit at Otto's and will later be displayed in Schlow Library.

John introduced Frank Deutsch, who spoke on "Mathletics: Mathematics in Sports." Based on a book by Wayne Winston, who teaches at Indiana University, called *Mathletics* (Princeton Univ. Press, 2009), Frank's talk explained the basics of gambling on team sports, mainly football and basketball. The common practice is to bet on what will be the point spread between the winning and losing team. The betting line, based on the perceived rating of the two teams, is set by a small group of sports consultants in Las Vegas. A typical bet is the 11/10 type, in which the bettor puts up (for example) ten dollars. If the game's outcome exactly equals the line, no money changes hands. If the score exceeds the line and the bettor wins, he puts up ten dollars and wins ten, and the bookie earns one dollar. The bettor must win 52.4 percent of the time just to break even, and few really make a living from betting on sports. The line may be changed if too many bettors put money on the underdog. Frank cited Steven Levitt's 2001 study of 20,000 bettors on NFL games, showing that the wisest strategy is to bet on home team underdogs. Bookmakers have power ratings on all NFL and NBA teams that enable them to set the predicted point spread, giving a 3-point edge to football teams playing at home (4 points to home basketball teams). Bettors may also wager on the total number of points scored by both teams in a football match. Frank also explained the rules for scoring college and professional football teams in games that need overtimes to determine the victors. This leads to careful calculations by competing teams as to whether it is more apt to win if it receives the ball (plays offense) first or second. The rules changed in 2012 for professional football teams.

Until then, the game's outcome was determined by a "sudden death" score, which favored the receiving team, which won 60 percent of the time. Now they have a "modified sudden death" system, giving each team a chance at possession unless the first receiver team scores a touchdown, but this still favors the team that gets to receive first. Steve Brams (2007) has proposed a "cake-cutter solution" that calls for placing the football on the line where each team has a 50 percent chance of scoring. One team chooses where to place the ball; the other gets first crack at playing offense. Frank then explained the current method for determining which college football team is the national champion, which as of 2014–2025 means that the four top-ranked teams face off (#1 vs. #4 and #2 vs. #3) in the Rose and Sugar Bowls on 1 January, and then the two winners play against each other in the championship match on 12 January. Frank argued that an eight-team playoff (four matches, two semifinals, and then a championship game) would work better. As for basketball, J. Wolfers (2006) claimed that 5.5 percent of all college games are fixed by players who have been bribed to slacken their efforts, i.e., "point shaving." This has led to past scandals at CCNY, NYU, LIU, Kentucky, and other universities. Wolfers' calculations were challenged by Heston and Bernhardt, who studied all games played 1990–2006 in which one team was favored to win by more than 13 points, and all games in which no betting was involved. In practice, if the favored team is ahead, it tries to hold the ball late in the game, even if it reduces its margin of victory. Frank chose not to report on Winston's treatment of the mathematics of baseball. In the ensuing discussion, members talked about betting on horse and dog racing, basketball playoffs (March Madness?), fortuitous effects on a team's performance such as sun and wind direction, the effect of marketing strategies, the NCAA's policy on sports betting, whether coaches' strategies are affected by betting odds, and Mike McQueary's admission that he used to bet on Penn State football games in which he was playing. The meeting ended at 7:50 p.m. Attendance: 19 (16 members, 2 spouses of members, 1 guest who is a potential member).

Next program: Mark Meckstroth, "Frederic Auguste Bartholdi: The Statue of Liberty and Other Works." at Celebration Hall, 9 April 2014, 6 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Arthur Goldschmidt, secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (9 April 2014)

President John Vincenti called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m. and told the members that they must soon elect a new vice president. The treasurer and secretary will continue to serve in 2014–2015.

He introduced Mark Meckstroth, whose topic was “Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi: The Statue of Liberty and other Works.” He and his wife Meta had spent a fortnight in Alsace and had become interested in the Bartholdi Museum, the smaller replica of the Statue there, an allegorical statue of human figures holding up the world, and a bust of Albert Schweitzer. Bartholdi (1834–1904), born in Colmar and educated in Paris, visited Egypt for the first time in 1855 and was impressed by its gigantic statuary. His inspiration came from Edouard de Laboulaye, who first proposed a statue of liberty in 1865, just after the passage of the 13th Amendment, as a gift from the French to the American people. Bartholdi revisited Egypt in 1868–1869 and attended the opening of the Suez Canal. Some historians believe that he presented to the khedive of Egypt a sketch for a lighthouse with a woman in an Egyptian peasant’s gown with her outstretched arm, pointing the way for ships to the Canal, but Khedive Ismail did not accept the proposal. Instead, Bartholdi was commissioned by Laboulaye, who, together with descendants of Lafayette and Rochambeau (who aided the Americans in their war for independence), spearheaded a drive in 1874–1875 to raise \$400 thousand from the French people to pay for the statue. In the meantime, Bartholdi had visited the US for the first time in 1871 and saw New York Harbor, which he envisioned as the site for a statue comparable to the ancient Colossus of Rhodes. He produced the arm holding the lantern in time for it to be displayed in Philadelphia’s Centennial Exposition in 1876 and later in New York’s Madison Square Park (1876–1882). Visiting the US a second time during that 1876 Exposition, Bartholdi also presented a fountain, which now stands in Washington’s Bartholdi Park, near the US Capitol.

His earliest statue was of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic General Jean Rapp (in Colmar), and he worked on “Liberty Enlightening the World” under inspiration of the Colossus of Rhodes, a coin portraying the ancient Roman goddess Libertas, and the colossal statue of Carlo Borromeo, erected in 1697 and the first to use copper sheeting. Representing a country in female form (and Columbia as a symbol for liberty) is common. Examples include a fresco in the US Capitol, posters, currency, the statue atop the Capitol Dome, the Statue of the Republic for the 1893 Columbian Exposition, depiction of the Triple Entente in 1914, and even the iconic symbol for Columbia Pictures. He may have used his mother, or his wife, as the model for the woman. Alexandre-Gustave Eiffel, later famous for the Eiffel Tower, built the statue’s internal structure. The work was assembled in France, then disassembled and shipped in more than 200 crates, arriving safely in 1885 to New York, where it was reassembled. Funds to build the pedestal were raised by the American people, and it was erected on Bedloe’s (now Liberty) Island. The dedication took place on 28 October 1886, led by President Grover Cleveland. No women were allowed on the island for the dedication, but there was also a large parade in New York City, and Emma Lazarus’s famous poem was read aloud and later placed on a plaque at the base of the pedestal in 1903. Among American sculptors influenced by the Statue of Liberty is Philip Ratner, who made many of the statues now on Liberty Island. Bartholdi’s other works include the Lion in Belfort that is carved out of a mountain and honors France’s resistance to the Prussian invasion in 1870, the Jean Rapp statue (1854), a monument to Admiral Bruat, a statue of engraver Martin Schongauer in front of Colmar’s Unterlinden Museum, the Lafayette statue in New York’s Union Square, the Bartholdi Fountain, engravings on the Brattle Square Church steeple in Boston, and the Vincengetorix monument in Clermont-Ferrand France). A lively discussion ensued about the construction, funding, and present state of the Statue. 18 attended.

Next meeting on 14 May 2014: Update on the Value of Yogurt in our Diet—Manfred Kroger.

Respectfully submitted, Art Goldschmidt, Secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (14 May 2014)

Vice President Steve Smith, acting for John Vincenti, who could not attend, called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. Manfred Kroger introduced his wife Goldie and son Steve; Steve Smith introduced his wife Michelle. Mark Meckstroth welcomed Ed Buss back after a long absence. Steve reminded members that we must elect a new vice president in June and announced that during the coming month he would be seeking paper presenters.

He then introduced Manfred Kroger, who gave an informative talk about yogurt and what it does for your body. He has coauthored the *Encyclopedia of Fermented Fresh Milk Products* (1992) and *Consumer Health: A Guide to Intelligent Decisions* (8th ed., 2007) and many articles and reviews. He spoke about our changing concept of bacteria, traditionally viewed as harmful to the body, whereas in fact the human body contains and indeed needs bacteria, including the types found in yogurt. When he first came to State College, it was impossible to buy yogurt, and he introduced it at the Penn State Creamery, thus popularizing it locally. He also corrected yogurt's definition in *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, as well as that of acidophilus milk. As food science and probiotic labeling have grown in popularity, yogurt consumption has increased and the practice of medicine has changed. The positive uses of bacteria have compensated for the overuse of antibiotics. Kroger explained how yogurt, sourdough bread, kefir, and kumiss (fermented mares' milk) are made and how they can cure diseases just as well as more costly probiotic pills claim to treat. Creamery customers at first were shocked at the idea that the yogurt they were buying contained bacteria. He related how a Russian immigrant family founded a highly profitable American company to make and sell kefir (a milk product made from kefir grains) and told about Dannon Yogurt's founding by a family from Barcelona and of an Armenian family that started Colombo Yogurt. Another immigrant who introduced Americans to yogurt's benefits was Elie Metchnikoff, whose *Prolongation of Life* appeared in 1923.

Alexander Fleming's discovery of antibiotics in 1928 is well known in light of the expansion of the antibiotic drug industry since 1945 but the human body itself contains many bacteria that help children and adults to fight disease. We still know too little about probiotics, which, together with fiber and antioxidants, play a major role in prolonging human life. Our intestines, measuring in length 2.5 times our body height, or if their lining were turned into carpeting they would cover a whole football field, contain many areas where digestive processes occur. Medical science has paid much attention to the physiology of the brain, but less than it should to the study of the bowels. "You are only as healthy as your gut." Greater knowledge would help in the fight against obesity, diabetes, yellow fever, and that worst killer of young children: diarrhea, which causes a million deaths a year due to rotavirus infection and sometimes to radiation. Doctors should not overprescribe antibiotics, which kill good bacteria, of which we have some 200 different species in our intestines alone. Yogurt is a good preventive for "Delhi belly" or "Montezuma's revenge." He spoke about the experimental use of fecal transplants in rats to cure obesity. The study of the human microbiome will help us learn how better to treat diseases. He noted that annual consumption of yogurt in the US has risen from one to twenty quarts annually. Japan has produced much scholarship in the internal microenvironment and even sells a probiotic fluid product, "Yakood" (spelling?), in machines. Numerous types of yogurt are made and sold in India. He described how people make yogurt at home. There are various methods of flavoring yogurt. The sharp biting flavor of plain yogurt actually contains a poison. He speculated on the whey that is strained out of the yogurt: its contents and uses. Questions from members included whether yogurt can be made from skim milk, which is possible, but not from soy milk; how yogurt can solve the problem of lactose intolerance; whether the 200 varieties of bacteria in the human intestine ever clash; and claims that yogurt can serve as a means of mood management.

15 members and 3 guests attended. At the next meeting (11 June) Gary Miller will speak on "Frank Buhl: Turn of the Century Fuel Magnate."

Respectfully submitted, Art Goldschmidt, secretary

No minutes of the June meeting.

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (10 September 2014)

President Stephen Smith called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m. Art urged the members to bring more guests who might be prospective members. Treasurer Lee Stout reported that the treasury has \$2434.51, about \$10 less than a year ago. He reminded the members to pay their annual dues. Frank Deutsch introduced Amit Das, who has attended several meetings and is now a candidate for membership. Upon Frank's nomination, the members voted him into the Club unanimously.

Smith invited attenders to relate interesting things they did over the summer. John Vincenti took a two-week land and sea tour of Alaska, later went to Ireland for the Penn State-University of Central Florida game. Steve also attended that football game took a two-week tour of Ireland. Amit went to the Finger Lake and Martha's Vineyard. Frank Deutsch attended the weddings of two of his grandchildren. Mick received toured the California coast from LA to SF. Art and Gordon both went to the Chautauqua Institution, but on different weeks. Gordon went to Boston and will attend the wedding of one of his grad students in Minneapolis. Marylee spent part of the summer in California's Contra Costa and Trinity Counties. Dave's daughter graduated from college. A guitar player, he did some traveling around the Nashville area. Lee attended several high school and college graduations and had cataract surgery. Roy spent a lot of time in Minnesota. Dean and his wife have bought property in Florida and spent some time fixing it up, also went to Austin, Washington state, and Idaho. Mark is planning to travel to the Bahamas on Monday.

News of members: Rex Warland, having undergone cancer treatment successfully, hopes to come back soon. David saw Ed Buss at Dorothy's 90th birthday party and reports they will soon move to Foxdale.

John delivered a photographic lecture on the IATC convention at Brock University, St Catharines, Ontario, during which he described Brock University and its campus amenities, the University's namesake Sir Isaac Brock, who died in the battle of Queenston Heights fighting for his country, its University's controversial metal artwork entitled "She Wolf," the architecture and international character of St Catharines, our tour buses, places he visited, Ontario's wine country, the Welland Canal and its locks. He recommended Joey Feta's Greek Restaurant and Niagara-on-the-Lake's Shaw Festival, drugstore, and shops. He reported on the session he attended and the administrative acts passed by voting members, mainly the new family membership plan (which John sent to all members after his return), the new IATC officers, and two of the talks (the ones about China's future and about Canada's treatment of its First Nations). John showed a photo of the new officers and announced the 2015 convention in Lincoln, Nebraska, and the 2016 one in Columbus, Ohio.

Afterwards Art briefly shared his observations and experiences at the convention, especially the session on member recruitment and retention, for which he prepared a handout of the main pointers for clubs, and also, at a member's request, speculated about Obama's possible strategies for the Middle East.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. Our next meeting will be on 8 October, when Steve Smith will talk about traditional agriculture in tropical Latin America.

Respectfully submitted, Art Goldschmidt, secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (8 October 2014)

President Stephen Smith called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. Under the family membership plan approved by the IATC, Louise Goldschmidt and Michelle Smith, who had come as guests, were proposed and accepted as members by acclamation. Members were invited to report on trips they had made since our last meeting: Marc Meckstroth to Macchu Pichu and the Galapagos, Gary Miller to Maine, and Amit Das to New York. John Vincenti distributed his brochure. Gary, acting membership chair until someone can be found to serve, offered some questions and proposals on recruitment. Must a potential member be nominated by a member, or can s/he initiate an application? How can we advertise? Members felt a prospective member should contact the president, or another designated officer. S/he may come but must notify the secretary to order the right number of dinners in advance. Gary urges us to invite spouses to join, write a press release to the local paper after each meeting, have each speaker post a brief summary of his/her talk on our Web site, invite members of other groups to attend when the talk relates to their interests and urge them during the dinner or after the talk to consider joining, and offer a free dinner to any member who brings at least three guests during a year. We may have a guest night, or host a special reception, make lists of potential candidates, and invite outside guests to speak to our club. Steve will convene our Executive Committee, but all of us may initiative proposals on recruitment.

Steve gave a PowerPoint lecture about traditional tropical agriculture in Latin America. He and Michelle have extensive field experience in its rural areas, notably Peru, Venezuela, and Costa Rica. They went to a jungle research station on the Upper Amazon and the Napo Rivers. Traditional agriculture is an indigenous form of farming, with a high level of ecological rationale, using local knowledge and natural resources to manage agrobiodiversity, maintain spatial and temporal crop diversity, optimize crop mix-tures for space and environmental resources, recycle nutrients, conserve water, manage resources wisely, control crop succession, protect against insects and other pests, reduce risk, stabilize and secure yields, optimize diet, suit local culture and ritual, and best utilize the local environment. Indigenous farmers layer their crops, mimicking natural forest patterns, and may make skillful use of the slash-and-burn technique (plant ash can fertilize the soil). His pictures showed how motorcycle taxis serve in cities (e.g., Iquitos) and on narrow rural roads; houses built on river banks and inland houses on stilts to withstand annual floods; long dugout canoes, used for fishing and transport, with a tiny motor in back, operated by adults and children; a woman grills a coati over a log fire on a metal floor; crops are planted in layers near the river bank, thus mimicking forest progression; reeds are cut and spread on the banks, so that when the river floods, the dried reeds harbor fish that are easily caught; how cassava is raised, quickly before the flood, or stored in the ground for a long time; how a long stick serves as a lever to pull out the cassava root, whose poisonous cyanic acid must be removed before it is cooked, ground into a powder, or brewed; and bananas and even rice are raised in the river valley. Most farmers are small landholders. They complain of low crop prices and high prices for inputs, and how schooling causes young people to shun traditional farming. Fishing for small piranhas, he caught and grilled some, and they tasted good. Boas are ubiquitous. He illustrated traditional and modern, large-scale and small-scale slash-and-burn techniques, which may cause erosion. Once a field is cleared, the farmers grow a succession of crops over a 2 to 3-year period, then let the land go fallow, following a 7 to 12-year cycle. Leaving land fallow presupposes a low population density. Shifting to Costa Rica, he showed ornamental plants raised for the international market, banana trees grown to shade coffee plants, or at times beans. He showed an ancient irrigation system in Peru's high desert in the Nazca region, carrying water from a mountain source in stone-lined ditches, an "eye" every few meters, cleared of weeds by small children, and still used.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Art Goldschmidt, Secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (12 November 2014)

President Stephen Smith called the meeting to order at 6:50 pm and introduced his guest, Gary Herbert. Frank Deutsch introduced his wife Mary and her friend, Judy Gunberg. Dean Snow introduced his wife Janet, and Roy Hammerstedt introduced his wife Susan. The club welcomed Rex Warland back. Several members reported on recent travels or books they had read. Steve suggested that the Club buy its own projector for PowerPoint presentations, the members voiced assent, and he will look into projectors and their cost. He will report back in December. He spoke about two handouts, one from the IATC and the other from Gary Miller, regarding new member recruitment. We need to elect a membership chair. We will publicize our meetings in the *Centre Daily Times*, *Centre County Gazette*, and *Voices of Central Pennsylvania*. He then introduced Roy, who gave a paper on Ponzi Schemes: How Many Affect You?

Carlo Ponzi, originally Italian, carried out several financial schemes, e.g. the international reply coupons that could be redeemed for postage stamps, based on differential exchange rates between foreign postal services. Of course, schemes like this go back in time to the earliest settlements that were large enough that one person couldn't know everyone else. They commonly grow out of envy, when a few have a lot and the rest wish they did, most often during economic booms. There are natural "bubbles" and then there are "scams" or camouflaged pyramid schemes, not always intentional. One knows the scheme will fail but cannot predict the moment of implosion. People are drawn in, believing that they will win, even though everyone understands it is a collective folly. They imitate the behavior of other people in matters they don't understand. In mathematical terms, $p = s - c > 0$ (profit occurs when the sale price minus the cost is greater than zero). With three variables, you can do anything. But if you stop getting timely infusions of new money, the scheme collapses. Only the early participants gain. Graph illustrated how participants increase geometrically for a while, but the rate of increase slows down and eventually reverses. He cited some recent American examples, e.g., Bernie Madoff's investment scam.

One possible example is Herbalife, a global nutrition company, with 3.7 million members in 90 countries. But members must buy several thousand dollars' worth of shakes and supplements before they get any bonuses. The firm has lasted 34 years; so far new investors have bought in as others have sold out. Tupperware, which also uses an independent sales force, is legitimate; Amway, too, probably. As a rule of thumb, a distributor must sell 70 percent of the products he bought within a month. He should sell at least one product to ten different customers in that month. In some cases, however, the distributor may want to consume some of the product and/or develop a network of buyers for another product. A new worker may be lured by stock options, the chance to get ownership shares as part of his pay, as in some Silicon Valley firms. Presumably he understands the risk, but what about the advice some academic departments give to incoming graduate students regarding their chances of academic appointment on receiving their doctorates? The Pennsylvania Lottery, Social Security and Medicare, and some state retirement systems make promises on assumptions about the future that may not be realized. Over time, both deceptive schemes and methods of detecting them have grown more sophisticated, notably in a world where people don't know one-another and investments are increasingly hard to understand.

To conclude: "If it sounds too good to be true, it is." In the ensuing discussion, involving at least eight Club members, other investment schemes were analyzed, including WorldCom, Enron, Arthur Andersen, and Bitcoins. Nutritional supplements are a common product, as they are unregulated and, in some cases, dangerous. A few "Ponzi schemes" are started by well-intentioned people. One member objected to including government programs like Social Security in this category. Several members talked about academic departments that mislead graduate students.

The meeting adjourned at about 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Art Goldschmidt, secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (10 December 2014)

President Stephen Smith called the meeting to order at 6:45. Pete Cole introduced his daughter Cynthia Matly, and son, Jim Cole; Jim Serene his guest, Brian Dempsey, and Roy Hammerstedt his two guests, Jim Shore and Allen Phillips. Amit Das told about his recent trip to South Africa, notably Cape Town, Robben Island, and a safari; John Vincenti just saw the Rockettes in NYC and ate in Carmine's and Star Dust Diner; Steve Smith described his visit to San Antonio and the LBJ Ranch. Art announced the IATC Convention in Lincoln, Nebraska, in June 2015. Steve reported on efforts to recruit new members. Gary Miller wrote a brief account of our previous meeting in an article that was printed in the *Centre County Gazette*. Art circulated a sympathy card for a relative of Cliff Bastuscheck, a long-time Club member and treasurer, who died on 25 November. John Vincenti offered to email important news to Club members. Steve announced that Amit Das and Gary Miller have exchanged their program dates. He introduced Pete Cole, who spoke on managing the world's fishery resources, especially cod in Gloucester, Mass.

Pete became interested in Gloucester when he was teaching at UMass/Amherst. Its fishery is a part of a broader problem of declining world fish resources. The reported catch is rising and the estimated supply of potential seafood is declining. However, the available statistics are highly unreliable. Farm fishing is rising, especially in SE Asia, northern South America and China most of all, and is very profitable. Most fish go for human consumption, but some is used for fertilizer, fish oil and animal feed. Fish prices are rising and its quality declining. He cited some Wegmans prices: wild Pacific halibut costs \$28.95/pound. Tilapia, which is farmed and increasingly popular, is cheap, but bland. The world's fish consumption is rising faster than its population. In 2011 global consumption was about 19.2 kilograms per capita. He talked about efforts to regulate fishing. The Marine Stewardship Council goes to fisheries to document their route from the fishery to the store, but not all fish are inspected. Consumers can judge trout or salmon, but other fish are hard to assess and there is no grading system. Fishing in Gloucester and other ports goes back to colonial times. The Treaty of Paris (1783) delimited fishing rights between the US and Canada, with actions after the War of 1812.

The US government got involved only after Civil War. Its first laboratory at Woods Hole opened in 1875. Its National Marine Fisheries Service, since 1975 a branch of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency, regulates fishing beyond the historic three nautical mile limit. These waters were international and open to anyone wanting to fish there. The Coast Guard, Navy, Homeland Security, EPA, but especially the NMFS now patrol the fishing areas. The US and Canada had a functional agreement on North Atlantic fishing from about 1950 to 1975, when it broke down. The UN has passed four conventions on marine waters, including fishing rights. The Magnuson-Stevenson Act set up eight councils to formulate plans regulating the harvest of 478 species of edible fish, and several bills are now before Congress to revise the rules. Pete wanted to serve on a council and was twice named an alternate, which surprised him as he had no business sponsor. The Councils' efforts to set limits on fish size and numbers have led to many protests. It is hard for the Councils to count fish in lakes, harder in large bodies of water and even harder to break down a catch into species. When they make a "virtual population analysis" they often err. Losing its fishing industry has cost Gloucester and other fisheries billions, and will worsen. What can they do with beautiful old homes, supply houses for nets and other fishing gear, an ice plant, and a boat ramp when fishing vanishes? Questions were asked about the effects of climate changes and catastrophic storms; changing currents affecting food supply for fish, fish hatcheries in Gloucester, loss of halibut, mercury in fish as a health threat, what goes into Omega 3 capsules, rising price of anchovies, low rate of intake increase relative to variable population growth by region, fisheries' disappearance on Lake Superior, zebra mussels, effects of water pollution, Gloucester's future, shellfish, notably scallops. Recommended reading Kurlansky's *The Last Fish Tale*.

Meeting adjourned 7:50. Attendance: 19 (14 members, 5 guests). Next month: Marylee Taylor.

Respectfully submitted, Arthur Goldschmidt, secretary