

The Bulletin

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The Torch Club of Frederick, Maryland

fredtorch.org



Scroll



Go to Page Number for . . .

1. Face Page
2. This Page
3. Torch International
4. Dutch's Daughter
5. Map to Dutch's Daughter
6. [Next Presentation](#)
7. [Presenter](#)
8. [Lunch Reservations](#)
9. Most Recent Presentation
10. New Members
11. Fall Programs
12. Winter & Spring Programs
13. Club Leadership
14. Club Archives

The International Association of Torch Clubs

The Torch Club of Frederick is one of nearly 50 in the United States and Canada. IATC was founded in 1924 in Minneapolis as a highly interactive organization in which members discuss stimulating presentations given by members and guest speakers.

Torch members are intellectually inquisitive with a broad range of experience in creating knowledge that respects diverse viewpoints.

Torch membership includes outstanding atmospheres in which to freely exchange ideas, enjoy comfortable club dining venues, and, most of all, close fellowship.

Learn more at the Torch International website.

<https://www.torch.org/>



Lunch Meetings at Dutch's Daughter

As expected consideration of others, lunch attendees must be fully vaccinated and boosted against Covid, which also applies to guests and new members. Zoom meetings may be required when county or state pandemic warnings limit in-person attendance.

Dutch's Daughter

581 Himes Avenue, Frederick, Maryland

dutchs-daughter.website

301 | 668 | 9500



Next Presentation

Monday, May 18, 2026

Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater on "The Role of the County Executive"

Ms. Fitzwater has declined Frederick Torch's lunch invitation but has agreed to speak as scheduled on the 18th. She will be accompanied by a bodyguard. A recent poll showed only 36% in favor of Fitzwater's re-election.

After serving two terms on the Frederick County Council, Jessica Fitzwater was elected County Executive in 2022 with 50.4 percent of the vote. She served her term relatively uneventfully until becoming embroiled in controversy over Frederick County data centers, which she first proposed and continues to advocate.

Her and the County Council's open involvement with data center interests unleashed unprecedented public resistance reported by polls showing majority public opposition and 72% in favor of a public referendum on data centers.

Against stiff odds, a countywide campaign gathered half again as many signatures as required to qualify a public referendum on data centers on the November general election ballot. As the County government tries to keep the referendum off the ballot, 84% in another poll said let the referendum go forward.

This Month's Presenter

Jessica Fitzwater

Jessica Fitzwater is a native Frederick Countian who began her career as a music teacher at the county's Oakdale Elementary School where she taught until her election as County Executive in 2022. She is a violinist and, since 2005, a member of the Frederick Symphony Orchestra.

Influenced by her musician father, she began playing music as a child and by fifth grade had taken up the violin. Fitzwater earned a B.A. in music at St. Mary's College of Maryland and an M.S. in educational leadership at Hood College.

She is also a graduate of Emerge Maryland, a training program to prepare Democratic women for political office. In office, she has focused on data centers, workforce housing, immigrant affairs, and labor standards. She led efforts which expanded health benefits and increased the minimum wage for full-time county employees to \$21 per hour.



Lunch Sign-up

 ttending or not, please let Reservations Chair John Hewetson know and, if you plan to attend, your seating requests and the names of your guests. Please respond to John at torchreservations@gmail.com or call him at 301.663.8130.

Sign-up Deadline— Preferably one week before the lunch but later OK

Cost— \$30 per person (also payable if a signed-up no-show)

Cancellations— Email the address above before the day of the lunch.

Most Recent Presentation

Annette Breiling on "Adding Friends Education to our Community"

Frederick Torch member Annette Breiling's talk focused on bringing Friends education to Frederick County. (Quaker is the colloquial name for the Friends religion.)

We heard what it takes to start private Quaker-oriented schools including Friends Meeting School in Frederick County which Annette founded. She explained why Friends schools create learning environments focusing on peace, honor all people locally and internationally, and stress foreign language classes and a diverse inclusive culture as fixtures at all grade levels in Friends teaching.

Annette also told us of her post-retirement promotion of Martin Luther King's vision for Beloved Community and addressed his triple giant evils of racism, materialism, and militarism.

New Members



At our next lunch, be sure to welcome new club members **Mary Kippen** and her sister **Sara George**, **Pat** and **Tom Dorsz**, **Melanie Galloway**, **Diane Kantner**, **Deborah Ross**, **Ellen West**, **Stephen** and **Bobbie** Rideout, and our newest, **Karen Kapust**. As the second-largest of the 49 Torch clubs, our success relies on strong recruiting. Please invite your friends who enjoy stimulating company and fascinating presentations to attend a fine club lunch or two and then join.

Club Membership Chair Karl Bickel is here to help. You can get in touch with Karl at KarlBickel@comcast.net or 301.639.9665.

For more information and to download the club membership application, visit the club website at fredtorch.org.

2025-26 Presentations

September - December

Many thanks to 2024-25 Program Committee co-chairs Norine Haas and Marguerite Wilson for arranging the 2025-26 program line-up.



September 22- Marguerite Wilson on "Camp Ritchie During WWII: A Secret Training Camp for Intelligence Soldiers"

October 27- John George on "Charles Lutwidge Dodgson" popularly known by his pen name Lewis Carroll"

November 24- Ellen West on "A Visit with Cosmonauts"

December 15- Major J. B. Blevins on "The History of the Salvation Army"

2025-26 Presentations

January - June

January 26- Dorothy Bonnett on "Circles of Women: A Discussion of Chinese Women's Lives"

February 23- Lois Jarman on "Art and the Brain"

March 23- Roseann Lester on "Challenges and Rewards of Life as a Violinist"

April 27- Annette Breiling on "Adding Friends Education to our Community"

May 18- Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater on "The Role of the County Executive"

June 22- Annual Frederick Torch picnic

2025-26 Board of Directors

President Margaret Procario and the club's board of directors hope you enjoy this year's interesting programs. The following members are serving as your 2025-26 directors and committee chairs.

Elected Directors

President	Margaret Procario
Vice President	John Hewetson
Secretary	Peter Michael
Treasurer	Claire Kondig

Appointed Committee Chairs

Assistant Treasurer	John Kondig
Program Chair	Marguerite Wilson
Reservations Chair	John Hewetson
Membership Chair	Kark Bickel
Publications Chair	Peter Michael
Co-webmaster	Ed Seidewitz
Co-webmaster	Michael Procario
Presentation Support	Jeff Wilson

Club Archives

Torch Club of Frederick *Bulletin*

Past issues beginning with October 2017 are archived and may be viewed, downloaded or printed [here](#).



2025-26 Program and Member Roster

The 2025-26 Program and the club's Member Roster are updated regularly. View, download or print [here](#).



The Club Website

Upcoming and past presentations and more may be reached at the club website [here](#).



Member Survey

Survey results may be viewed, downloaded or printed [here](#).