

The Frederick Torch *Bulletin*

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The Torch Club of Frederick, Maryland

Tap Here for New Club Website



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Lunch Meetings at Dutch's Daughter

Frederick Torch meets on fourth Mondays at noon.

581 Himes Avenue, Frederick, Maryland

<https://www.dutchsdaughter.com>

301 | 668 | 9500

Next Presentation

Monday, September 28, 2026

Frederick Mayor Michael O'Connor on "The State of the City"

Mayor O'Conner is the elected executive of what with its 92,000 residents recently became Maryland's second-largest city, growth viewed as desirable by some, regretful by others. Frederick County is growing three times as fast as any other in the state, sweeping up the City in rapid growth.

With its well-preserved 100-block core and appealing Carroll Creek Linear Park, central Frederick has been acclaimed as one of the nation's most attractive towns. But only the core; surrounding it is a ring of sprawl that may soon include a data center that wants to elbow its way in. Recently, a Frederick City Council member was caught self-dealing on behalf of her data center client.

Frederick is now a majority-minority city with no ethnic group accounting for more than half of its population, with both City and County playing catch-up with today's diversity.

How does a mayor contend with these challenges and more, stay within a \$227 million budget, and keep constituents happy all at once? We will hear how at the club's 2026-27 season opener on the 28th. We hope to see you there.

This Month's Presenter

Mayor Michael O'Connor

Since taking office in 2017, Mayor O'Connor has emphasized downtown and neighborhood revitalization, economic development, infrastructure investment, affordable housing, environmental sustainability, and modernizing the city's government operations.

To deal with Frederick's rapid to growth, in 2026 the mayor restructured the Office of the Mayor to improve accountability and coordination across city departments.

He has served on numerous regional and community boards.

Before entering elected office, Michael O'Connor spent nearly two decades in local media, then as Business Manager of Saint Katharine Drexel Roman Catholic Congregation.

Mayor O'Connor lives in Frederick with his wife, two daughters and two dogs.



Lunch Sign-up



lease let Reservations Chair John Hewetson know if you plan to attend, your seating requests and the names of your guests. You can 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

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

As has been her experience in other public forums, the County Executive was met with concerns over her position on data centers when she addressed Frederick Torch on May 18. Despite polls showing massive public opposition against data centers, her talk glossed over the topic. This led later to pointed questions from the audience in which she refused to say whether she was for or against data centers despite her public position of being for them.

Results of the June 23 primary election rocked elected data center proponents when County Council President Brad Young, theretofore probably the County's most popular office holder, was sent packing clearly because he had led the data center charge. A refreshingly nonpartisan election result had broken unmistakably along lines of whether those running were pro or con on data centers.

In July, the County Executive put a freeze on data center approval but has avoided saying whether she would permit them if re-elected. Meanwhile, candidates of both parties who want to put the brakes on Frederick County data centers are polling well.

2026-27 Presentations

September - December

*Many thanks to 2025-26 Program Committee Co-chairs
Marguerite Wilson and Toni Clarke for arranging the 2026-27 program line-up.*



September 28- Frederick Mayor Michael O'Connor on "The State of the City"

October 26- Nancy Whitmore on "Ghosts and Legends of Frederick"

November 23- Ed McMahon on "Frederick Growth by Fault or Design"

December 14- Ed Seidewitz on "Edwin Albert Seidewitz (1866-1918): A Family Legacy in Maryland"

2026-27 Presentations

January - June

January 25- John Gardner on "Peaceful Beekeeping: 50 Years with Honeybees"

February 22- Dorothy Bonnett on "Circles of Women: A Discussion of Chinese Women's Lives"

March 22- Karl Bickel on "The Feasibility of a County Police Department"

April 26- Peter Michael on "Other Humans: The Revelations of Ancient DNA"

May 24- Lois Jarman on "Art and the Brain"

June 28- Annual Frederick Torch picnic

New Members



At our next lunch, be sure to welcome new club members **Pat and Tom Dorsz, Stephen and Bobbie Rideout, Karen Kapust and Christina Lund.**

As the second-largest of nearly 50 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 new club website, fredericktorch.com.

2026-27 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 2026-27 directors and committee chairs.

Elected Directors

President	Margaret Procario
Vice President	John Hewetson
Secretary	Peter Michael
Treasurer	Jeff Wilson

Appointed Committee Chairs

Program Co-chair	Marguerite Wilson
Program Co-chair	Toni Clarke
Reservations Chair	John Hewetson
Membership Chair	Kark Bickel
Publications Chair	Peter Michael
Presentation Support	Michael Procario
Co-webmaster	Ed Seidewitz
Co-webmaster	Michael Procario

The International Association of Torch Clubs

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

Torch members are intellectually inquisitive and comfortable in the world of ideas. Torch membership offers an outstanding environment in which to freely exchange topics of interest, enjoy comfortable dining venues, and, most of all, benefit from close fellowship.

Members benefit from *The Torch* magazine published three times a year. Each issue features the four or five best member-authored articles delivered to clubs as talks.

The Torch Foundation accepts donations and bequests which are used to defray operating costs, keep annual dues modest, support club attendance at annual Torch conventions, and fund the Paxton Prize awarded to the best *Torch* article each year.

Learn more at the Torch International website.

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

Club Archives

Torch Club of Frederick *Bulletin*

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



2026-27 Program and Member Roster

The *2026-27 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](#).