

Blue Ridge Torch Club of Leesburg
May 5, 2017
Volume X, No. 9



Blue Ridge Torch Club of Leesburg is TEN years old! Join our celebration at the meeting May 16. Champagne toast!

Presentation

“Voice of America - During and after the Cold War”

Speaker: Irene Kelner, MD, Ph.D.

During the Cold War, there was no truthful information in the Soviet Union media. The Voice of America (VOA) Russian language broadcasts provided essential information about events in the world and in the Soviet Union. Irene Kelner spent 27 years in the Russian Service of VOA in different capacities as a broadcasting journalist including news and current events, special programs and talk shows. She was on the air every day. She will share personal experiences working at VOA and will talk about changes that occurred after the end of Cold War.

President’s Notes

This month marks several notable periods in our club's history. First is, as Dona notes elsewhere in this newsletter, our tenth anniversary as a Torch Club. That's quite an achievement. For those of you who have been members since the beginning, congratulations, and my sincere thanks for making our community a place where we can enjoy good company, good conversation, good food, and intellectual stimulation every month.

Second, this month is the final month for (most of) our current slate of officers. I'd like to publicly acknowledge the great support and contributions from Eva Leavitt, our Vice Chair and Program Chair. She did a fantastic job of organizing and executing a year's worth of really interesting programs. Beth Schlabach, as Secretary, has had several responsibilities, most important of which is getting out this newsletter once a month. She has carried this out with care, with accuracy, and with perseverance as some of us (well . . . me) were less than fully responsive to her requests for material. Dave Thomas, our Treasurer, has kept the books straight as he negotiated with International Torch,

with Crossroads, and with each of us, and successfully produced surpluses each year. Gini Laughlin, our Registrar, has been amazing in keeping track of our attendance, working closely with Crossroads to provide varied and excellent menus, and being there every month to smilingly greet us (with Anita Zatz's wonderful assistance) at the door. Fortunately, Gini and Anita are continuing for next year.

Equally important, this team has been great to work with as issues have arisen and decisions needed to be taken. In my years of working in volunteer organizations, I've never had such a cooperative, smart, and friendly group of colleagues. Thanks to you all.

Finally, let me remind you of our summer party/BBQ on June 20. More information on this will be forthcoming.

Torch Club's First President's Notes

BLUE RIDGE TORCH CLUB CELEBRATES A TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

In late 2006 and early 2007, George Du Bois, a long-term member of the Frederick Torch Club in Maryland, with help from other Frederick Torch Club members Anne and Dave Thomas, began sowing the seeds for a new Torch Club in Loudoun County. Working with staff at the George C. Marshall International Center (Dodona Manor) and the Balch Library, George identified a group of historians, docents, scientists and others he thought might be interested in forming their own local dinner club to share ideas and thoughts through member talks. Lunch meetings were held at the Tuscarora Mill in Leesburg to explain the history, organization and goals of the International Association of Torch Clubs (IATC), then numbering about 70 clubs scattered around the country.

As a growing number of people expressed interest in forming a new club, dinner meetings were held in January and February at the Magnolias in Purcellville. To help launch this new effort, Torch Club members came from Frederick and Hagerstown, Maryland to give talks previously made to their own clubs. In March, sufficient member interest indicated that officers were needed to organize the new group. Anne Thomas nominated Dona Wolf to be the new president, just seconds before Dona would have nominated Anne for the same job. Several others quickly volunteered to serve in other administrative

capacities, and the new Blue Ridge Torch Club of Virginia was on its way to being born.

The new officers decided that a more suitable dinner location with larger, well-lit space and lower cost meals was needed. After sampling several local restaurants, La Pergola in Leisure World was chosen as the ideal venue. On May 8, 2007, national IATC president Anne Sterling chartered our Torch Club with 23 members, and we became official. Charter members still active include Ray Beery, Murray and Page Bradley, Anne and Dave Thomas, and Dona Wolf, with George DuBois as our Honorary Founding Father.

In the 10 years since chartering, our Torch Club has grown to 44 members, even as membership has changed significantly. Club members participate actively in regional and national levels of IATC, have hosted the Region 3 annual meeting, published several papers in the Torch Club magazine, had two finalists for the prestigious Paxton Award, and each year send delegates to the IATC convention.

The club is still committed to pursuing its primary goal of “providing a place where ideas flow together, sometimes clash, and often explode into new patterns of thought; where varied disciplines meet face-to-face and share social and intellectual adventure . . . in a place where active minds become more active and personal growth emerges for those who participate.”

We look forward to the next 10 years of our Blue Ridge Torch Club as we interact with a wonderful assembly of thoughtful and interesting members.

Dona Wolf, Blue Ridge Torch Club’s First President

Reservations and Cancellations

Gini Laughlin receives reservations by phone or email: 703-729-2647 or gininix.laughlin@gmail.com. If you want a change in the listed entrée, you should let Gini know when you make your reservation. If you need to cancel your reservation, please call Gini at least a day in advance of the scheduled event. Please do not call the restaurant to cancel. Reservations for this month should be made not later than Friday, May 12.

Blue Ridge Torch Club Officers for 2016-2017

President, Mike Leavitt, michael.leavitt@gmail.com

Vice President, Eva Leavitt, eml@rocketmail.com

Secretary/Newsletter Editor, Beth Schlabach,
bethkschlabach@gmail.com

Treasurer, Dave Thomas, datmatdat@gmail.com

Reservations Chair, Gini Laughlin, gininix.laughlin@gmail.com

Blue Ridge Torch Club Members

Rose-Joan Barron, Ray Beery, Murray & Page Bradley, Brenda Brohard, Joe Comtois, Kay Curley, Marge DeSimone, Nancy Downey, Audrey Emley, Helen Falkenmeyer, Ann Gratz, Dolores Heck, Tehmi Jamaspian, Shirley Laing, Gini Laughlin, Mike & Eva Leavitt, Dianne Lebonville, Dan Lyons, Jackie Meeks, Susan Merk, Anne Miller, Jack Miller, Bill Muncy, Peg Neustadt, Bonnie & Stan Olenn, Memory Porter, Ann Robinson, Bert & Beth Schlabach, Marilyn Schwing, Marbeth Spreyer, Cosima Stankaitis, Gail Stanley, Janet Taliaferro, Anne A. Thomas, Anne H. & Dave Thomas, George Viener, Ursula Wagman, Bonnie Wohlford, Britt Wilford, Dona Wolf, and Anita Zatz

Region 3 New Opportunities - SAVE THE DATES:

Come meet your fellow Torchers! All Welcome!

International Association of Torch Clubs Convention, June 16-18,
Kalamazoo, MI

A great time and great opportunity to see this fabulous country of ours and meet interesting people. Page and Murray Bradley will be delegates from our club. All welcome. More details TBA.

Anne H. Thomas, IATC, Director Region 3