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Treasurer's Report

On September 24, 2025, the Blue Ridge Torch Club had an account balance of \$6,933. Roughly \$2,500 or so will be payable in January to IATC as Annual Dues, leaving ~\$4,400.

Happy Halloween



Coming In November:
Steve Creskoff and Jim Grefer; What Can We Expect From the Administration's New U.S. Tariff Policies?

BLUE RIDGE TORCH CLUB Dinner, Tuesday, October 14, 2025

Ambiance Banquet Restaurant (Cash Bar opens 5:30) Dinner at 6:00
"Hypnosis and the Power of Suggestion" with Joline Matheson

We are all susceptible to the power of suggestion. Suggestion might be overt, "Please turn down the TV volume." It might be subtle, calling up an idea in your mind by associating it with something else. We even respond physically without conscious intention to verbal or visual suggestion. If you watch someone eating a lemon, you pucker. If you see someone yawn, you yawn.

Hypnosis is often described as a state of relaxation marked by focused attention and greater responsiveness to suggestion. As a therapeutic tool it has been used to treat anxiety, compulsions and addictions among other problems. It can be useful in sports psychology, in pain management, or in performing stage entertainment.



Joline earned her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from Syracuse University and did her post-doctoral work in rehabilitation counseling at Assumption College in Worcester, MA. She taught at LeMoyne College in Syracuse and the University of Pittsburgh, and was a full professor at Worcester State University. Joline is a resident of Riverbend.

Here is the menu for our October dinner. We begin with a Caesar salad of romaine lettuce and parmesan cheese. For Entrees, we offer a choice of grilled salmon with lemon butter dill sauce, served with grilled veggies and basmati rice, OR a Mediterranean Pasta mixed with broccoli, spinach, sun dried tomatoes, and garlic in cream sauce. We will offer a vegetarian dish. For dessert, cheese cakes or puff pastry delight, coffee & tea.

Prices are \$45 for members and \$50 for guests. Please pay with check or cash at the door or with your building representative. For reservations go to blueridgetorchclub.org. Click on the red icon "Register for the October Meeting." The deadline for RSVP or cancelation is Thursday, October 9. Those who cancel after the deadline will be responsible for payment.

President's Column

The Blue Ridge Torch Club had a great month in September. Our membership remains strong, our finances are in solid, and our members and guests enjoyed the monthly dinner meeting.

The ambiance of the Ambiance Banquet Restaurant was nice. The venue was warm and inviting, spacious, with table seating close enough to keep it intimate. It was well lit, yet not too bright. The servers worked hard, were polite and friendly. Anna, the Ambiance Manager, provided excellent service. She maintained a cooperative attitude and worked hard to smooth out our first time challenges.

We acknowledge, however, that there were a few glitches. We discussed these with Anna, and she will make sure there are improvements in the dinner service, the sound system, and the presentation screen.



Our September speaker was Dennis Spriggs of Riverview. Dennis took us on a trip to the colorful, yet infamous Rwanda. We learned a great deal about the country, the people, the culture, and, sadly, about the terror and damage of the attempted genocide. We also met the gorillas. The gorillas were great. Dennis's pictures

showed them to be interactive, intelligent, gentle, and strong.

For the upcoming October dinner, our featured speaker will be Joline Matheson, a trained psychologist. Her topic will be "Hypnosis and the Power of Suggestion;" where she promises to impart her knowledge of hypnosis and not to make any of us do something silly.

In November, Steve Creskoff and Jim Grefer will tag team and discuss the international relations and the expected economic impacts of the Administration's new tariff policies.

We are looking for dinner speakers for between now and May 2026. If you're interested in giving a Torch talk, please email Crash Konwin, Torch VP and program manager, at kkonwin@aol.com with a few sentences on your topic proposal, and which months you would be available to speak.

Also, if you haven't yet, please send your annual dues before our October meeting. Dues are \$80 for the first member and \$40 for the second member of a household.

We look forward to an informative and entertaining year!

Wayne



Authors in Our Midst

By Dona Wolf

A Torch Club is an assembly of speakers. Many members join a Torch Club expecting that they will either give or listen to Torch Talks at our monthly dinners. In fact, 26 of our current 62 Blue Ridge Club members have given at least one Torch talk in the last few years, and more than a dozen members have given multiple talks.

But Torch members are not limited to making oral presentations. Many go on to convert their talks to Torch papers published in the international Torch Magazine. Some Torch Clubs (including our neighboring club in Winchester) actually require members to write their Torch Talk first and submit it for peer review before presenting it to the membership at a dinner meeting. We have chosen a much less academic and scholarly approach in our own club.

But we are not without a number of professional writers and authors in our midst. Over time we can claim several colleagues who have published wonderful writings that are well worth our time to read, beginning with our Founder, Dr. George Du Bois.

George B. Du Bois, Jr, a long-time member of the Frederick, Maryland Torch Club, decided in 2006 to launch a Torch Club in Loudoun County. He came to Leesburg, stirred up interest in forming a new club from among docents at Dodona Manor (historic home of General George C. Marshall) and Friends of the Balch Library (genealogy and history library in Leesburg), and voila!, the Blue Ridge Torch Club was born in May 2007. He remained a member of both the Frederick and Leesburg clubs for a couple of years, and is still a member of the Frederick Club today.

Dr. Du Bois received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Virginia in 1957 and his PhD in American Labor History from the University of Maryland in 1995. In the interim, he worked as an attorney with the National Labor Relations Board. His academic training, labor law work experience, and ten years of research and writing, enabled him to produce **Cross-Class Alliances and the Birth of Modern Liberalism, Maryland's Workers: 1865-1916**, a rare 350-page study of labor and politics at the state level. He published his book in 2009 at age 75.

George Du Bois published his second book, **Understanding China: Dangerous Resentments**, an overview of Chinese history ca. 2070 B.C. to 2014 A.D., at age 81 in 2014. I have a copy of his first book and will share it with anyone at our next club dinner if you are interested in seeing it.

We have an amazing group of writers and authors in our Blue Ridge Torch Club, and I think Dr. George B. Du Bois serves as a model for all of us. If other authors in our club have published (including self-published) a book, I invite you to send me an email so that we may share your literary accomplishments with our membership in future newsletter articles.

My email is Donawolf@aol.com.

October Holidays and Celebrations

International Day of Non-Violence, Oct 2:

An immensely appropriate testament to our violent times, this day celebrates the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, our world-wide emissary of peace and non-violence. Gandhi preached that non-violent resistance was a powerful tool of revolution. The success of his leadership in India's independence and of this method in the 1960's U.S. Civil Rights movements, confirmed its power. United Nations Resolution A/RES/61/271 in June 2007 established this day to "disseminate the message of non-violence... through education and public awareness".



Knotted Gun Sculpture, created by Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd after the assassination of his friend John Lennon, is located in front of the United Nations Headquarters in New York City as a symbol of peace and non-violence

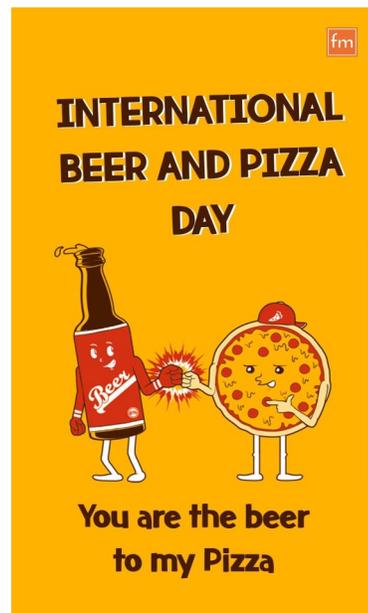


General Pulaski Memorial Day. Oct. 11: General Kazimierz Pulaski, was a brilliant Polish cavalry strategist and tactician, who fought and was killed in the American Revolutionary War. Shortly after arriving to America from Poland, Pulaski proved his value by saving George Washington's life and saving the Continental Army from defeat in the Battle of Brandywine. His skills and talents are thought to have helped turn the tide of the war in favor of the American Army. The U.S. Congress established this commemorative day in Public Resolution 16 in 1929, to celebrate his contributions to America's independence.

International Beer and Pizza Day, Oct. 9: Created by Nick Saulino, a software developer, to celebrate—well, to celebrate beer and pizza. What more needs to be said?

Blue Ridge Torch Officers welcomes everyone to Autumn

- Wayne Kaiser, President: wkaiser2367@gmail.com
- Ken "Crash" Konwin, Vice President: kkonwin@aol.com
- Jim Grefer, Secretary/Newsletter Editor: greferjames@gmail.com
- Fred Bishopp, Co-Treasurer: fredbishopp@hotmail.com
- Joline Matheson, Co-Treasurer: jnjmat@gmail.com
- Dona Wolf, Past President: donawolf@aol.com



Current Members

Charlene Ahmed

Syed Ahmed

Ray Beery

Barry Berger

Fred Bishopp, Jr

Murray Bradley

Page Bradley

Brenda Brohard

Steve Creskoff

Kay Curley

Tom Devaney

Nancy Downey

Madelon Eisenberg

Hosny El-Khordagui

Jerry Frola

Joe Gibson

Rosa Gibson

Jim Grefer

Steve Gross

Trudy Gross

Carol Hall-Veit

Kenton Hamaker

Peggy Hamaker

Neelam Henderson

Wes Henderson

Kathleen Hughes

Fran Hurley

Wayne Kaiser

Maria Kelly

Peggy King

Ken "Crash" Konwin

Judith Kory

Eva Leavitt

Michael Leavitt

Barbara Leone

Joline Matheson

Doug McCollum

Sue McCollum

Sue Merk

Joyce Mitchell

Pat Monahan

Elsa Moustafa

Andrew Norton

Bill Phillips

Pat Phillips

Memory Porter

Jeannie Raddatz

Michael Raddatz

Travis Sample

Ann Schmitt

Catherine Shepard

Hugh Sockett

Dennis Spriggs

Janet Taliaferro

Anne A Thomas

Anne H Thomas

Bill Thomas

Dave Thomas

George Viener

Britt Wilford

Terry Wilford

Dona Wolf

"In all debates, let truth be the aim, not victory..."

— Author unknown, often attributed to William Penn