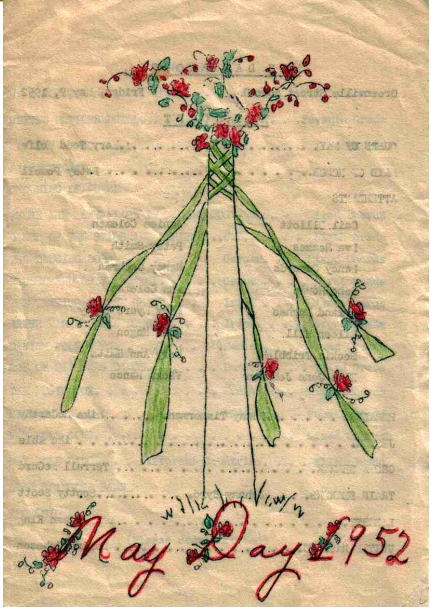




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**Treasurer's Report**  
 On March 30, 2026, the Blue Ridge Torch Club had an operating balance of \$4,960.

*Happy May Day*  
*May 1*



**"Coming June 9**  
*Annual Torch Picnic*

**BLUE RIDGE TORCH CLUB Dinner, Tuesday, May 12, 2026**  
**Ambiance Banquet Restaurant Doors open at 5:30. Dinner at 6:00.**  
**Joe Dockery: "Evolution of Chiropractic"**

Beginning with a dramatic spinal adjustment in 1895, chiropractic has grown to become the largest drugless healing profession in the world.

In his May 12 talk, Lansdowne resident and 46-year Chiropractor, Joe Dockery, D.C., will lecture on the history and benefits of chiropractic, along with stories relating to his personal experience in the field. Dr. Dockery will also focus on the scientific efficacy of spinal manipulation, chiropractic's often tumultuous relationship with the American Medical Association, and its ultimate acceptance into the world's overall health care universe. He will also present his personal views as to where Chiropractic went right, and where Chiropractic may have missed an opportunity to add significantly to the public interest in alternative care.



Dr. Dockery is a 1978 graduate of Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, IA. He practiced for 32 years in Staunton, VA, then 10 years in Saranac Lake, NY, before returning to Staunton for a final four years of practice. He and his wife Marylyne moved to Blue Ridge in March 2025.

Joe is also an accomplished percussionist, guitar player, and singer who has performed multiple times here at Lansdowne Woods as a solo artist, and with his Staunton band, Rhythm Road. His latest venture was as an actor, singer, and dancer as he starred opposite Jim Grefer, Joyce Mitchell, LynneAnne Coyle, and Judy Kory in Lansdowne Woods' recent production of the musical, *Singing in the Rain*.

**Menu for May 12 Dinner.** Dinner begins with a Caesar salad made with romaine lettuce and shaved parmesan. Entrees are a choice of Chicken Cordon Bleu with dijon cream sauce, or Grilled Salmon topped with garlic, basil and tomato. A vegetable dish will be made available.

**Price** is \$45 for members and \$50 for guests. Please leave a check with your building representative, or a check or cash at the door. For reservations go to [blueridgetorchclub.org](http://blueridgetorchclub.org). Click on the red icon "May 12th Meeting." The deadline for RSVP or cancellation is Thursday, May 7. Those who cancel after the deadline will be responsible for payment.

## President's Message

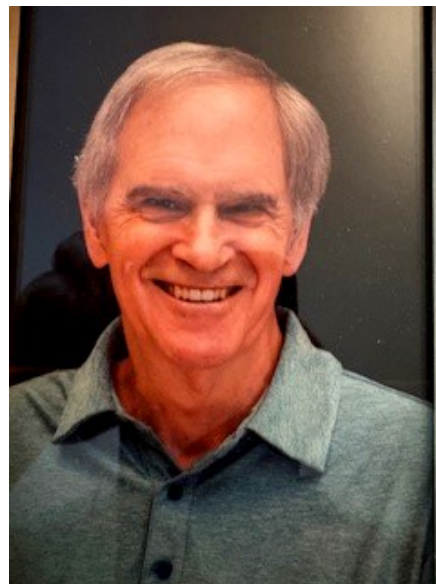
Our Blue Ridge Torch Club, which was founded in 2007, is part of the International Association of Torch Clubs (IATC), with chapters across the United States and Canada. The IATC marked its 100th anniversary at the Richmond, VA Convention in June 2024.

The IATC 2026 Convention is scheduled for June 11-14 in Winston-Salem, NC. Join Torch Club members and guests for a vibrant four-day gathering filled with presentations, workshops, fellowship, local exploration, and celebration in Winston-Salem. The agenda aims to provide participants with an enjoyable and flexible experience, balancing planned activities, talks, and presentations with many opportunities to explore what the city has to offer.

Anne and Bill Thomas will be attending. They have been appointed as representatives of the Blue Ridge Torch Club. If you are interested in attending, you can find convention and registration details at [Torch.org](http://Torch.org) (Password: Torch1924). You may also feel free to contact Anne directly for assistance at 703-909-6425 or [anneathomas@gmail.com](mailto:anneathomas@gmail.com).

We hope you plan to attend.

Wayne



## March Inductee to the Torch Club: Murray Johnston

Murray is from Pittsburgh PA though he spent his later youth outside of New York City in Greenwich CT. Murray received a BS Chemistry degree from Bucknell University in 1976, and a PhD Chemistry degree from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1980.

He met his future wife, Heather, in Evanston IL while completing a postdoctoral fellowship at Northwestern University.

Murray was on the faculty at the University of Colorado, Boulder for 8 years, and then at the University of Delaware in Newark, DE for 35 years, serving terms as Department Chair and Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences along the way. Murray taught at all levels from introductory chemistry for nonscientists to specialty graduate courses in chemistry. His research involved the chemistry of airborne particles – where they come from, where they go, and how they impact human health and the environment.

Heather and Murray moved from Delaware to the Magnolias in February 2026. They enjoy the many recreational and cultural activities the community and surrounding area have to offer. They have two children, a son who is on the faculty in entomology at Purdue University, and a daughter who lives in Ashburn and works in contract management.



Murray Johnston

## April Torch Talk: Mike Leavitt “Climate Change Skepticism: Evaluating the Science, the Models, and the Policy Debate”

This presentation distinguishes two fundamentally different types of climate skepticism. The first is “dismissive skepticism,” which denies basic greenhouse physics or relies on non-peer-reviewed sources and receives no serious treatment here. My focus is on serious scientific skepticism, peer-reviewed, methodologically rigorous critiques by credentialed researchers who accept warming but contest its magnitude, mechanisms, and policy implications.

Scientific consensus rests on convergent evidence across temperature records, ocean heat content, ice cores, and sea level data. Human greenhouse gas emissions are the dominant driver of observed warming. This is not in serious dispute.

Where legitimate debate exists, it is consequential. Equilibrium Climate Sensitivity (ECS)—the warming expected from a doubling of CO<sub>2</sub>—carries an IPCC likely range of 2.5–4.0°C, but peer-reviewed energy-balance estimates place it as low as 1.5–2.45°C. That difference has enormous implications for policy urgency.

Attribution science is robust at the global level but contested for regional phenomena and extreme weather events. Paleoclimate evidence is powerful but limited by the low temporal resolution of proxies. Climate models perform well at global, long-run temperature trends but carry significant structural weaknesses in cloud feedbacks, regional precipitation, ocean circulation, and tipping-point behavior. They are best understood as probability distributions over plausible futures rather than deterministic forecasts.

The mitigation-versus-adaptation debate involves not just empirical uncertainty but genuine ethical disagreement, particularly over the social discount rate used to value future harms. Two economists can accept identical physics and reach opposite policy conclusions solely on the basis of their discount rate assumptions. The presentation closed with a four-zone map of the debate: what is settled, what is active science, what remains methodologically contested, and where genuine policy uncertainty lies. A well-calibrated view requires both scientific confidence and scientific humility simultaneously.



## Torch Club Officers wish everyone a solemn Memorial Day

- Wayne Kaiser, President: [wkaiser2367@gmail.com](mailto:wkaiser2367@gmail.com)
- Ken “Crash” Konwin, Vice President: [kkonwin@aol.com](mailto:kkonwin@aol.com)
- Jim Grefer, Secretary/Newsletter Editor: [greferjames@gmail.com](mailto:greferjames@gmail.com)
- Fred Bishopp, Co-Treasurer: [fredbishopp@hotmail.com](mailto:fredbishopp@hotmail.com)
- Joline Matheson, Co-Treasurer: [jjmat@gmail.com](mailto:jjmat@gmail.com)
- Dona Wolf, Past President: [donawolf@aol.com](mailto:donawolf@aol.com)



## May and the Military: It's Even More Than That!

By Jim Grefer

May is a month in which we celebrate and honor our military. The month of May is **National Military Appreciation Month**. It is the brainchild of Senator John McCain, who wished to celebrate the relationship between our military and the freedom we enjoy, and to honor the sacrifices made by servicemembers and their families throughout history. Congress unanimously approved Senator McCain's proposal on April 1999.

On **Military Spouse Appreciation Day** (May 16), we also celebrate the sacrifices military wives and husbands make, in time, stability, and emotional support for their spouses.

**Armed Forces Day**, celebrated on the third Saturday of May (May 16 this year) is a national holiday in which citizens can come together and thank military members for their service.

On **Victory in Europe (VE) Day**, May 8, we celebrate the victory of the Allied Forces over the Axis powers in the European front of WW2.



VE Day poster by students at Howard Primary School, Croyden England

And of course, the last Monday of every May is **Memorial Day**, in which we honor the military men and women who gave their lives for our country.

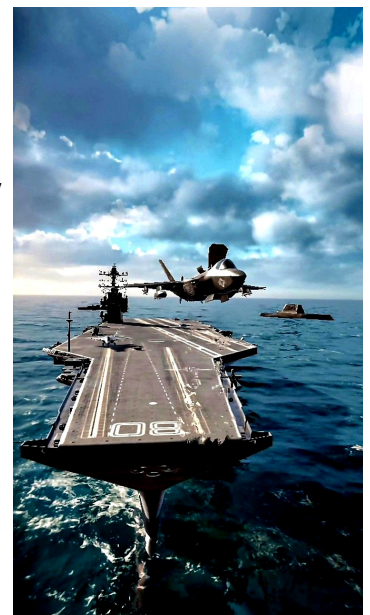
These are all great occasions. But, have you ever asked why we honor and respect our military so? Of course, they protect us from foreign invasion. But it's more than that. They make enormous sacrifices in their protection of us. Yet it's even more than that. We honor them because we trust them to do the right thing, even when doing the right thing is hard and when doing other things would be better for them personally.

As a U.S. Navy veteran who later worked for the military as a civilian, I was always impressed with servicemembers' professionalism and effectiveness. But even more, I was amazed at their code of conduct, at the fact that they serve honorably despite the temptations of their overwhelming power.

You see, the U.S. has the largest most powerful military in the world. The U.S. Navy has about 300 ships and 1,000 fighter jets. The Air Force has about 1,500 fighter jets and 150 bombers. The Army and Marine Corps have over 600,000 troops, of which over 150,000 are infantry. The U.S. Coast Guard has an impressive inventory of ships and helicopters. Above all, there are about 1.4 million active duty personnel, plus about 200,000 reservists.

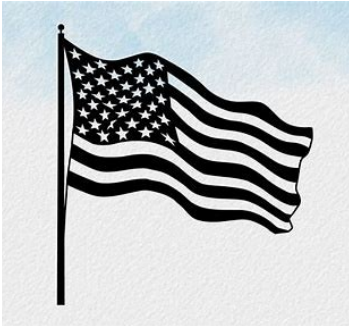
And yet, we don't worry that this impressive and powerful organization would go rogue someday and try to take over the American government. Or that some charismatic and partisan civilian political leader would take control of the military and turn it against us. This has happened in other times and places: Germany in WW2, Iran in the 1970s, Iraq in the 80s, North Korea and China throughout my lifetime. But not here. Not to us.

*(Continued on the next page)*



## May and the Military: It's Even More Than That! (continued)

We owe this trust partly because of the constitutionally required division of authorities. The President is the Commander in Chief, but Congress declares war. All Services fall under the U.S. Military, but they each have their own chain of command. And though each Service has its own command structure, they all fall under civilian rule. All this helps to prevent one group or one charismatic leader from taking control of the military for personal gain.



But it's more than that. Servicemembers take an oath of loyalty to the U.S. Constitution, and to protect America from all enemies, foreign and domestic. So, while they may serve *under* their military and civilian leaders, they ultimately serve us, the American people. Their oath focuses them on their true and highest responsibilities.

But it's even more than that. Servicemembers live within a code of honor, duty, and service to their country. This is more than a mantra; it's more than a cliché.

It's a culture, an ecosystem, a set of convictions that is born in leadership that emanates across all servicemembers. It builds strong bonds that drive members not only to protect America, but to protect all Americans. Servicemembers and military leaders take these responsibilities with utmost solemnity, and their culture of honor drives them to serve with distinction, professionalism, and courage.

Americans have been lucky. We have long lived under the protection of an extraordinarily strong and honorable military. We have never really been at risk from a rogue military or from a civilian leadership who would politicize the military or turn the military against the American people. We respect the military because it is powerful and protects us. But we honor the military because it is honorable.

The month of May is when we take special notice of this and celebrate and thank the honorable people serving in our armed forces. May that spirit flourish this month and let it live in our hearts every day of the year.



**Duty, Honor, Country: Those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be.**

Douglas McArthur  
Speech to cadets at Westpoint May, 1962

## Current Members: April 2026

Charlene Ahmed	Lyn Green	Sue McCollum
Syed Ahmed	Jim Grefer	Joyce Mitchell
Barry Berger	Carol Hall-Veit	Pat Monahan
Fred Bishopp, Jr	Kenton Hamaker	Elsa Moustafa
Murray Bradley	Peggy Hamaker	Andrew Norton
Page Bradley	Neelam Henderson	Bill Phillips
Brenda Brohard	Wes Henderson	Pat Phillips
Christine Caldwell	Kathleen Hughes	Memory Porter
Sheila Cramer	Fran Hurley	Ann Schmitt
Steve Creskoff	Murray Johnston	Catherine Shepard
Kay Curley	Wayne Kaiser	Hugh Sockett
Tom Devaney	Maria Kelly	Dennis Spriggs
Beckham Dickerson	Peggy King	Anne A Thomas
Tina Dickerson	Ken "Crash" Konwin	Anne H Thomas
Joe Dockery	Judith Kory	Bill Thomas
Marylynne Dockery	Eva Leavitt	Dave Thomas
Nancy Downey	Michael Leavitt	George Viener
Madelon Eisenberg	Barbara Leone	Janet Walker
Hosny El-Khordagui	Joline Matheson	William Walker
Jerry Frola	Jenny Mayberry	Britt Wilford
Joe Gibson	Sam Mayberry	Terry Wilford
Rosa Gibson	Doug McCollum	Dona Wolf

### Take Checks to Your Building Representative

The line at the Torch Dinner will go more smoothly, and you will get to the bar and your table more quickly if you drop your check under the door of your building representative a couple of days before the dinner.

Riverbend	Fred Bishopp	711	Magnolias	Barry Berger	MS 206
	Joline Matheson	106	Potomac Ridge	Wayne Kaiser	221
Blue Ridge	Joe Dockery	221	Riverview	Kent Hamaker	906