

# THE TORCH CLUB OF FREDERICK, MARYLAND

fredtorch.org



## Monthly Bulletin

Volume 26, Number 1

September, 2019

Scroll



# YOUR 2019-2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Welcome Back

President John Menke and the other members of the Torch Club of Frederick's board of directors welcome you back for this Torch year's interesting programs and dinners. We look forward to seeing you.

President	John Menke
Vice President	Cathy Potter
Secretary	Peter Michael
Treasurer	Claire Kondig
Assistant Treasurer	John Kondig
Program Chairs	Pat Allen & Roy Greene
Membership Chair	Frank Sledge
Reservations Chair	Cathy Potter
Webmaster	Minh Tran

# NEED A LIFT TO DINNER?



Membership Chair Frank Sledge invites you to get in touch with him and he will do his best to arrange your transportation to and from club dinners. You can reach Frank at [f.sledge@comcast.net](mailto:f.sledge@comcast.net) or at 301.980.2019.

# NEXT PRESENTATION

SEPTEMBER 23, 2019

## **Syl Schieber on "Healthcare USA: A Threat to Future Prosperity"**

The United States spends nearly a fifth of GNP on health care, double the average of other industrialized nations. Syl's presentation will look behind the current political discourse and show why health care spending is a threat to future prosperity and why cost control is imperative.

The 2018 U.S. congressional elections were substantially about health care and the 2020 elections may be more so. Drug and insurance costs have been highlighted as causing public angst, and soaring insurance premiums, out-of-pocket expenses and medical bankruptcy risks as the result.

But in 2018, drug costs, insurance costs, and out-of-pocket spending on personal health goods and services accounted for only 31 percent of total medical spending, the lowest share in the past 60 years. What accounts for the rest?

# DINNER SIGN-UP

Attending or not, please let us know and, if you plan to attend, your seating requests and the names of your guests. Please respond soon to [torchreservations@gmail.com](mailto:torchreservations@gmail.com) (preferably) with “Torch” in the subject line of your email.

~ No click-through? Paste the email address into the “To” line of an email.~

**Sign-up Deadline**— No later than 5 days before the dinner

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

**Cancellations**— Email the address above before the day of the dinner.

**Book Exchange**— To enjoy this pleasant club offering, put books you bring on the book table. You may take the same number as you brought. Before leaving, you may take any remaining books and must take yours.

# THIS MONTH'S PRESENTER

## Syl Schieber

Sylvester Schieber served on the United States Social Security Advisory Board from 1998 through 2009, and was appointed its chairman by President George W. Bush. From 1983 through 2006, he was at Watson Wyatt Worldwide where he launched and managed the firm's Information Center. He retired from Watson Wyatt in September 2006 after serving on its board of directors for nine years.



Prior to joining Watson Wyatt, Syl was the first research director at the Employee Benefits Research Institute in Washington, DC, and before that worked at the Social Security Administration where his last position was deputy director of policy analysis.

Syl holds a doctorate in economics from the University of Notre Dame. His latest book, *The Predictable Surprise: The Unraveling of the U.S. Retirement System*, published by Oxford University Press, was awarded TIAA-CREF's Paul A. Samuelson Award in 2012.

# MOST RECENT PRESENTATION

MAY 20, 2019

## **Penny McDougal on "Home Funerals and Natural Burial"**

Penny gave us a graceful update on the growing return toward traditional funerals in which, as in times past, wake, vigil, viewing and visitation are held in the family home under the direction of the departed's loved ones, avoiding the expense and rituals of funeral homes. Penny reminded us that home funerals restore dignity to the departed and comfort to the the family.



We heard how green burial minimizes environmental impact, uses non-toxic biodegradable caskets or shrouds, avoids embalming and concrete vaults, conserves resources, reduces carbon emissions, protects workers' health, preserves or restores natural habitats, and how the grave site remains natural, not requiring fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, or extensive landscaping.

# 2019-2020 PRESENTATIONS

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER

Many thanks to last year's Program Chair Jack Topchik for lining up the following presentations for the 2019-2020 year.

- **September 23, 2019**

Syl Schieber on "Healthcare USA: A Threat to Future Prosperity"

- **October 28, 2019**

Jack Topchik on "The Effects of the Espionage Spy Trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg on the American Jewish Community"

- **November 18, 2019**

Jeff Wilson with John Menke on "Technological Developments Related to Climate Change"

- **December 16, 2019**

Amy McDougal on "Medical Marijuana"

The speaker is the daughter of club member Penny McDougal.

# 2019-2020 PRESENTATIONS

JANUARY - MAY

- **January 27, 2020**  
Toni Clarke on "Foster Care in Maryland"
- **February 24, 2020**  
John Menke on an intriguing astronomy-related topic
- **March 23, 2020**  
John George on "Three Maryland Gardens—Hampton, Ladew, and Paca"
- **April 27, 2020**  
Marguerite Wilson on "Two 19<sup>th</sup> Century Court Cases Involving Maryland Slave Owners"
- **May 18, 2020**  
Clare Kondig on "The Impact of *The McGuffie Reader* on American Education"

# NEW MEMBERS

Our newest member is scientist **Gary Geernaert**, inducted at our April meeting. Retired Secret Service official **Larry Cunningham** will be inducted at the September meeting. Please be sure to welcome Gary and Larry at the September dinner. Their contact information has been entered into the club roster (link on the following slide).



Do you have acquaintances who would enjoy stimulating company, lively conversation, and interesting exchanges of ideas over excellent dinners, all followed by fascinating presentations? Invite them to a Torch Club dinner or two and then to join Torch.

For additional information and the club membership application, visit the club website at [fredtorch.org](http://fredtorch.org) or contact Membership Chair Frank Sledge at [f.sledge@comcast.net](mailto:f.sledge@comcast.net).

# CLUB ARCHIVES

Be sure to bookmark the following links in your web browser.

## **Torch Club of Frederick *Bulletin***

Past issues of the Torch Club of Frederick *Bulletin* beginning with the October 2017 issue have been archived and may be viewed, downloaded or printed [here](#).



## **2019-20 Program and Member Roster**

The *2019-2020 Program and Member Roster* are now available and updated regularly. View, download or print [here](#).



## **Club Website, Board Meeting Minutes and More**

Minutes of meetings of the board of directors of the Torch Club of Frederick may be reached at the club website [here](#).