

Why Are You Raising My Dues?

Convention voters unanimously approved dues of \$65 per regular member (and \$32.50 per household member) for the 2023-2024 club year – first appearing on the January 2024 invoices.

That's a \$15 increase for members and \$7.50 for the second person at an address. Translated to a per meeting cost, that's less than the cost of a cup of coffee.

OK, but why NOW?

1. If we didn't raise dues now, we would have to immediately cut a magazine issue or look at shutting the organization within five years
2. Dues haven't gone up in 15 years – while inflation went up 40%
3. We tried to avoid it –changing management firms, moving services online, and having board members pay most of their own expenses for club-related duties including travel.
4. The pandemic worked against us. Since 2016, we had lost 960 members (net) – some to COVID, some to clubs not meeting, and some to apathy around recruiting, which let clubs age out. That's about \$40,000 in lost dues per year.

We raised dues less than inflation
because we needed to stabilize the organization right now
AND
allow time for member growth in both existing and new clubs.

Growth is Already Happening!

- We charted our first new club since 2015 the week of the Convention – welcome to Williamsburg, VA! The Torch concept is still viable.
- We are seeing some clubs reporting growth in their rosters,
- We've shipped over 120 new member pins to clubs.
- The Convention attracted well over 80 people representing 28 of our 51 clubs

With More Growth to Come...

Your board acted this spring:



Rolled out professionally designed, Membership Growth & Expansion Toolkit. Access it on the [website](#) (password Torch1924) to download ideas and tools you can customize to help your club's recruiting.



Launched a fundraising campaign (the *Centennial Club*) in coordination with the Torch Foundation to support member recruiting & found new clubs. Check it out on the [website](#).

Why Belong to Torch?

Being Part of Torch means you're not just in another dinner club.

Torch is a unique experience offering a place where intellectually inclined people find a community that is seldom found in other places. And we are a hundred-year-old, international association that just formed a brand-new club.

Being part of Torch means Club Support

Fellowship	Having access to others like you – both locally and through virtual and live events with people from other clubs.
Access to Learning Opportunities	Table discussions, presentations, an award-winning magazine, and conventions plus a searchable archive of many past issues of the Torch magazine.
Club Organizational Support	Full electronic back-up for club rosters, a regional director to share ideas and help, multiple opportunities for officer workshops on club operations and recruiting discussions.
Financial Support	Clubs receive \$300 to send delegates to the Annual Convention and have access to Zoom licenses to facilitate remote connections
Professional-Caliber Recruiting Materials	<i>Brand new:</i> Best Practices Resource Guide and Toolkit for Membership Growth & Expansion here on the Torch.org website (password Torch1924). All the tactics are downloadable, customizable, and match the updated branding look of the website. Watch for a short video soon to help you identify what tactic(s) might work best for your club today!

There are many other tools and support available, like the Speakers Bureau to help if you have a gap in your program calendar, and New Member Pins and Silver Awards to acknowledge and honor your club members.

Being Part of Torch Means Sharing the Mission

Part of the Torch mission is to spread the Torch experience to more people through starting new clubs. Your club's founding was funded by Torch – and we're committed to bringing the Torch Experience to more people across the country and the world.

