

Bolton Hill

Community Association

Table Of Contents

Looking past COVID, put these events on your calendar	3
Marlon Amprey is the new delegate for Bolton Hill	5
A new novel of love and restoration on Bolton Hill	7
COVID clouds anniversary of CookHouse restaurant	9
Committee formed to review Bolton Hill’s historic public markers	11
Neighbors	14
Sweet, Spicy, Comforting Orange-Thyme Beef Stew	17
Bolton Hill Notes	18

Looking past COVID, put these events on your calendar

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/looking-past-covid-put-these-events-on-your-calendar/>

With a great burst of new year optimism, the BHCA Greening Committee is calling attention to a wide array of 2021 outdoor activities for neighborhood parks, along with a new map that pinpoints where each park is located. The mapmaker is Greg Baranoski, who also is a volunteer helping to maintain Douglas K. Morrison Park.

The calendar, admittedly aspirational at the earlier dates, assumes that COVID-19 is sufficiently under control to allow properly spaced participation in outdoor events, beginning with – maybe – a sock burning celebrating the vernal equinox, AKA the arrival of spring, on March 20. This symbolic goodbye to cold weather is part of a maritime celebration that, according to Preservation Maryland, originated in Annapolis in 1978. [

Boat builders, sailors and watermen who were sick of a long, cold winter that kept them off the water were said to have built a bonfire and thrown in their socks, vowing not to wear them again until it once again became too cold to go on the water. The Eastport Yacht Club and the Annapolis Maritime Museum observe this tradition and, with the assistance of social media, sock burning has caught fire across the country — even in land-locked areas. In Annapolis, however, last year’s celebration was cancelled because of the pandemic. That may also happen, here and there, this March.

The Committee is working with Antoinette Peale of the Madison Park Improvement Association and others to develop Arts -in-the-Parks programs. The Greening Committee prepared this calendar of events for 2021:

March 20 (tentative) Sock Burning; March Equinox Contee-Parago Triangle Park

April 4 Easter Egg Hunt Rutter’s Mill Park

May TBD Spring Soiree John Street Park

May 9 Mother’s Day Pot-Luck Rutter’s Mill Park

May 15 50th Anniversary Fete and Program Contee-Parago Triangle Park

June 5 Boltonstock Arnold Sumpter Park

July 16-18 Artscape Mount Royal Medians

September 24 F. Scott Fitzgerald Birthday F. Scott Fitzgerald Park

October 31 Pumpkin Glow Johns Street Park

October 31 Masked Pumpkin Parade Arnold Sumpter Park

November 11 Veterans Remembrance Day Congressional Medal of Honor Park

December Holiday Lights Display Johns Street Park

Marlon Amprey is the new delegate for Bolton Hill

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/marlon-amprey-is-the-new-delegate-for-bolton-hill/>



Bolton Hill’s Legislative District 40 residents have a new delegate to the Maryland General Assembly, ritually named by the state’s Republican governor with the support of only four members of the city’s Democratic Central Committee.

Notwithstanding that arguably undemocratic process, Marlon D. Amprey, a former schoolteacher and third generation West Baltimore resident, is eagerly approaching his first political office. He hopes to focus on improving public education, providing help for Maryland homeowners and renters weighted down by the COVID-19 pandemic and “decriminalizing poverty” by reforming law enforcement and the state’s criminal justice system.

He spoke briefly to the BHCA January meeting, as did Del. Melissa Wells, who also represents the district along with Frank Conaway Jr. and, in the senate, Antonio Hayes. Wells and Amprey both acknowledged that the session will be unusual, opening in person but then conducting much of its business online this year. (A small portion of Bolton Hill falls into District 46.)

Amprey is a new associate with the Cole Scholtz law firm, practicing business law. He is a graduate of the University of Maryland, has a master's in education from George Mason University and a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania. He interned in the congressional office of the late Rep. Elijah Cummings. He plans to continue working for the law firm part-time, during the legislative session. The firm does not lobby for its clients, he said.

He and his wife have what he calls a "starter home" in Hampden, and a nine-month-old daughter. He speaks rapidly: "I'm all about service, not pomp and ceremony." He promises to remain in the delegate position longer than his predecessor, voters willing. He says he is passionate about improving and equalizing education for Baltimore children. Amprey's uncle, Walter Amprey, served as superintendent of Baltimore city schools from 1991-97.

"I know what we need for our students, I know what we need to make our government more efficient, and I know what we need to make our economic system more equitable and to ensure that we have businesses and a thriving community," he said.

Amprey replaces Nick Mosby, who served five years on the city council, ran unsuccessfully for mayor, then was appointed in 2017 to the assembly. Last year he was elected president of the city council. He is the third delegate to fill the slot in a few years, but Amprey says he will hang around and try to deliver for his district.

Amprey won Democratic Central Committee nomination by a vote of 4-3, with three votes coming from Mosby colleagues on the city council: John Bullock, Phylicia Porter and James Torrence. The 4th vote came from political consultant and Bolton Hill resident Ben Smith, who chairs the committee. Amprey was the preferred candidate of Mosby and Sen. Hayes, according to the *Baltimore Brew*.

In a one-party city like Baltimore, it is common for political vacancies to be filled by the Democratic Party leadership without an election. Occasional calls for reform of that process have not gained much traction. There were 14 candidates who interviewed for the open seat. According to the *Brew* the committee deliberated just 10 minutes before voting.

--Bill Hamilton

A new novel of love and restoration on Bolton Hill

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/a-new-novel-of-love-and-restoration-on-bolton-hill/>



Jim is a balding, audaciously gay scholar in his mid-60s who lives on a quiet street in an 1850s brick townhouse in Bolton Hill.

He moved there not long before the Freddy Gray uprising after marrying a longtime West Coast lover, Joe. Retired after three “poorly-compensated” decades as a professor of Italian at a “public diploma mill,” Jim has a deep knowledge of Italian music and culture and has been known to belt out arias by Puccini and hymns in the choir of a progressive Presbyterian church. He has a wide circle of friends within and outside Baltimore’s “clannish” gay community.

Jim’s creator is **John C. McLucas**, 68, a retired professor who lives in a brick townhouse he acquired on Bolton Street five years ago. He taught Italian and Latin at Towson University for 36 years and Italian diction and repertoire to voice students at Peabody Conservatory. He studied opera as a young man and is an elder at First and Franklin Presbyterian Church. His hair is thin. He describes himself as a longtime LGBTQ activist.

Life imitates art, as Oscar Wilde might have said. Or sometimes the reverse. Both Jim and McLucas have AOL email-accounts.

Spirit's Tether is McLucas' second novel. It draws on that traditional hymn's theme of community to tell the story of "Godfather Jim" and his deep grief upon the untimely death of husband Joe, and the healing value of love and close relationships. It focuses especially on Jim's loving and unorthodox tie to J.J, his bright "spectrum-y" godchild who comes to live with Jim to study at Peabody. J.J. leaves behind a first-girlfriend, Lyric, and soon comes out as gay to himself and his family with his godfather's enthusiastic support.

Spirit's Tether is a sequel to McLucas' 2017 novel set in Rehoboth, *Dialogues on the Beach*. Both are published by BrickHouse Books' division dedicated toward "highlighting the voices of the LGBTQIA+ community" (Abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Transgender, Genderqueer, Queer, Intersexed, Agender, Asexual, and Ally community).

McLucas thinks of the book as literary fiction, not queer fiction, but the story is layered with sophisticated insight into flirty and sometimes sexual interactions between the protagonist and a range of men and women besides his godson, as he searches for "a twilight romance of muted fondness and tapering passions," not replicating the life with Joe. His writing is worldly and, often, elegant.

Both books are available at [The Ivy Bookshop](#), [Barnes & Noble](#) and, of course, [Amazon](#).

--*Bill Hamilton*

COVID clouds anniversary of CookHouse restaurant

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/covid-clouds-anniversary-of-cookhouse-restaurant/>



This time a year ago many in the neighborhood were counting the days: When would CookHouse, the new Bolton Hill restaurant, finally open?

In September 2017 the Karzai family, which for a long time operated b Bistro at 1501 Bolton Street, put this message on Facebook: "B is temporarily closed while we reorganize to develop a new concept for our valued guests." That re-opening never happened and the neighborhood for a while was, for the first time in more than a decade, without a full-service dinner restaurant.

When George and Jessica Dailey, neighborhood residents with deep experience in the restaurant business, stepped forward in 2018 to buy the building and refurbish the closed bistro, Bolton Hill breathed a sigh of relief. The Daileys promised a neighborly setting that would offer a breakfast, lunch and dinner menu different from that of On the Hill Café, which they also own, but would transform into an upscale eatery with a full bar. Over two years of on-and-off construction they invested heavily to remodel, build a new kitchen and set up a flashy new bar.

CookHouse opened with a sold-out house full of neighborhood diners on Feb. 15, 2019. Dinner included fresh seafood and steaks, duck and New American-cum-continental cuisine, with original cocktails and a curated wine list. It closed just a month later as COVID-19 blanketed the nation. They had hired a chef, two managers and more than a dozen other employees. Now they are all gone.

"What an experience this has been," George Dailey said. He was able to re-open for indoor and outdoor service from May – August. Outdoor tables usually sold out while the intimate, close-to-your-neighbor indoor setting gave way to widely spaced tables that were not filled. "People were nervous about coming inside," he said, "and just serving out of doors was unsustainable. So, in August we closed down, again."

Since November, CookHouse has operated from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. for carryout service only, a [menu](#) of original sandwiches and light lunch fare, including empanadas that are a glance back to Venezuela, where English-born George Dailey grew up. When the weather warms up and city regulators allow, he hopes to reopen outdoors. "We're not looking to re-open indoor dining any time soon," he said. "I don't want to be doing this forever, though. I am anxious to get back to where we were. The first day we don't have to be fearful of COVID is the day I will open up fully again."

Government loans and neighbors coming to buy lunch are helping to keep CookHouse afloat in the

interim, with three apartment leases upstairs helping to cover the expenses.

On the Hill Café at 1431 John Street is closed but Dailey hopes to re-open it when MICA resumes in-person classes, since students were a key clientele. *The Park Café* at 132 McMechen St., a coffee and sandwich shop also popular with students, is closed with no hint of re-opening. *The Tilted Row Bar and Café* at 305 McMechen Street opened a few weeks before CookHouse, closed for a while and now is serving weekend carryout dinners and drinks to go. *Noona's Pizza Place* on Mt. Royal Avenue is open for pickup and delivery for just a few hours Wednesday through Saturdays. *The Brass Tap* beer bar next door is open most days for online orders of craft beer, bar food and brunch and whiskey specials to go.

It's hard to recall The Before Times, when we could choose between them all for a beer and a burger, a drink and a small pizza, a veggie sandwich with soup or a fine dining experience, all within walking distance. Maybe someday soon....

Committee formed to review Bolton Hill's historic public markers

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/committee-formed-to-review-bolton-hills-historic-public-markers/>



The Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument on Mount Royal Avenue was splashed with red paint before its removal in 2017. Baltimore Sun photograph

In the aftermath of nationwide protests of systemic racism last summer, BHCA has embarked on an effort to better understand the history behind the public names, plaques and monuments in Bolton Hill. What is known about why they are here? What do they represent about the history of the Bolton Hill community and citywide? How does the Bolton Hill community feel about them at this time in its history?

Some public historic markers such as the remaining plinth of the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors monument on Mount Royal Avenue have attracted abundant condemnation, albeit no consensus on what action should be taken now. In other cases, many of us may not know who a public park was named for: who was Arnold Sumpter and why is Sumpter Park named after him?

BHCA solicited the Bolton Hill community for information, ideas, opinions and volunteers to help with the effort. A steering committee composed of neighborhood residents assembled a review committee in

the fall. Last month, the review committee virtually gathered for the first time to meet each other and start to map out a review process. Its members are representative of the Bolton Hill community along the lines of race, age, and gender and collectively bring a fitting array of experiences and professional backgrounds for their task ahead. Listed below in alphabetical order by last name:

Jeff Anderson (instructor of research methods at St. Mary's Seminary, public high school social studies teacher)

Iris Leigh Barnes (curator of the Lillie Carroll Jackson Civil Rights Museum on Eutaw Place)

Toby Ditz (retired Johns Hopkins historian)

Harry Lord (attorney who has served as chairman of Preservation Maryland)

Don Palmer (music critic and cultural historian)

Their review will compile existing research on Bolton Hill's public historic markers, conduct additional research where necessary, elicit public comments and formulate recommendations about how the community should respond to the public historic markers under review. From their review, the community will have a record of these public historic markers and the community's position on them.

The BHCA board of directors will eventually vote on the committee's recommendations for each marker, which could involve keeping as it is, adding interpretative signage or additional markers, or removing it entirely. In turn, BHCA would share its recommendations with the City, and the City would have to act where action is called for since the markers are public property.

The Bolton Hill community has already identified several public names, plaques, or monuments that will be subject to the review:

Plaques and Monuments:

Confederate Soldiers and Sailors monument plinth

Francis Scott Key monument

William Marbury, Sr. Mount Royal Garden Club plaque

Parks, Streets, and Developments:

Fitzgerald Park (Why is the park named after F. Scott Fitzgerald?)

Morrison Park (Who was Douglas Morrison and why is the park named after him?)

Rutter Mill Park (What is known about the owners of former Rutter Mill and why are the park and the street named after Rutter Mill?)

Spicer's Run (What was Spicer's Run and why is the group of newer row houses at the north end of the neighborhood named Spicer's Run?)

Sumpter Park (Who was Arnold Sumpter and why is the park named after him?)

The review committee wants to ensure that all public historic markers are identified by the community before commencing its review. If there is a public name, plaque, or monument that you've wondered about in Bolton Hill and is not listed above, please email markers@boltonhillmd.org by the end of January. Or, if you have information about the markers listed above or additional thoughts about or interest in the review process, feel free to email as well. Please note that this review will not apply to Blue Plaques since they're on private homes, and the Blue Plaque nomination and selection process will be reviewed under a separate process in the future.

The review process of Bolton Hill's public historic markers is an opportunity for the community to better understand and appreciate the names, plaques, and monuments that have been in its midst for years. Learning more about their history may even inspire the creation and naming of new public markers in Bolton Hill.

--David Nyweide

Neighbors

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/neighbors/>



Marvin Mills and David Storey, on the right

Fine-tuning a life in Bolton Hill

“Neighbors” is a occasional attempt to showcase the breadth and diversity of families and individuals living in Bolton Hill. If you have know someone we should profile, email us at bulletin@boltonhillmd.org.

In these complicated COVID times, many have lost jobs or are hanging on to their businesses in a

harrowing way. But for a fortunate few like David Storey, it has been something of a boon.

Storey, 65, who since 1999 has lived on West Lafayette Avenue with his organist partner of 30+ years Marvin Mills, restores and maintains pipe organs across several mid-Atlantic states as David M. Storey, Inc. “The pandemic has been good for us in a weird way,” he said, “because in churches, schools and institutions affected by the shutdown you have these big empty rooms, and we can take apart and spread-out parts of an organ and equipment without much inconvenience or disruption.”

When we spoke, Storey was deep into a job rebuilding a 1960s Casavant organ for a church in Athens, PA. He brought the pipes back to the company’s studio in a Hampden mill building to be cleaned and was preparing to replace worn mechanics in the organ with modern solid state components. He is most passionate about organs built in the 19th and early 20th Century. But Storey and his colleagues also regularly tune and adjust the much newer pipe organ at the Kennedy Center concert hall in Washington, DC, with its four keyboards and enormous pedal division with 85 stops, and 5,000 pipes.

Although he and his partner live in Bolton Hill and he knows well the organs of neighborhood churches, most of his work is elsewhere: Delaware, Pennsylvania, DC and Maryland and sometimes North Carolina, Nova Scotia, Puerto Rico and even Cuba. “I log about 60,000 miles a year,” Storey said. He says Baltimore is blessed to have had a rich history of organ crafting and a few 19th Century organs survive.

Storey restored the organ at First Unitarian Church crafted by Henry Niemann, a storied German organ builder who immigrated to the city and built organs from the 1880s until his death in 1899. He helped find in Quebec and then restore and install a 1955 Casavant Freres pipe organ at St. Bartholomew Church on Edmondson Avenue. The beautiful French accent of this organ's sound is an amazing musical addition to the fine Episcopal service there.

Storey was to have salvaged and rebuilt another Niemann organ at St. Stanislaus Kostka Roman Catholic Church in Fells Point, when that historic building, constructed in 1889, was sold to a developer and stripped of artifacts in 2011. Alas, when he arrived to take possession of the poorly maintained organ, according to the [Baltimore Sun](#) there were pieces of square wooden pipe splintered on the floor beneath the balcony where the organ was housed. Round pipes made of lead and tin were crushed and lying in a heap. Other parts were in a trash bin outside. Storey knew the organ and considered it a work of art.

More recently he expanded and installed the organ at St. Paul’s United Methodist Church in Kensington, MD, where his partner is the church organist. Mills is known in the organ world as a composer and arranger for organ and a devotee of religious spirituals.

Originally from Rochester, NY, Storey studied music history and worked for several organ builders before landing in Baltimore, where one of his five brothers lived, in 1984. He worked briefly as administrator for the long-gone Baltimore Ballet Company and for other music companies before starting his own organ business. He met his partner at an organ concert by Mills at Union Baptist Church in Madison Park. Although the organ is at the center of their lives, “He doesn’t take part in my work and I don’t turn pages for him,” Storey said.

Storey will teach a 14-week class at Peabody Institute in the spring.

--Bill Hamilton

Sweet, Spicy, Comforting Orange-Thyme Beef Stew

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/sweet-spicy-comforting-orange-thyme-beef-stew/>



While it's looking to be a mild January here in Baltimore, it doesn't mean you shouldn't enjoy a plate of comforting goodness. Blood oranges are in season and their flavor profile is a little different than other oranges. You may find notes of raspberries, cherries, or even grapefruit and their complexity in flavor are a welcome addition to this rich and warming stew.

A little heat from a red Fresno, a whole head of garlic, thyme sprigs, and the sweetness from the orange make for a sweet, spicy, and aromatic take on savory beef stew.

Serve this stew over mashed potatoes, grits, or with cooked egg noodles for the ultimate winter comfort meal.

[Get the recipe here.](#)

Bolton Hill Notes

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/bolton-hill-notes-7/>



Calling for Bolton Hill photos!

Do you have digital photos of people, events, parks, or architecture around Bolton Hill? Your photos would be wonderful to see on the [Bolton Hill website](#)! Keep in mind that photo credits will not be possible and no guarantee that your photos will be used. Group photos of people are preferred; photos of individuals will not be posted without consent. The higher the photo resolution, the better. Upload your photos [here](#).

New book highlights images of old west Baltimore

The author of a new book documenting the history of Old West Baltimore will talk about his book at a Zoom meeting of the Baltimore Historical Society that is open to the public.

Philip J. Merrill will talk about [Images of America: Old West Baltimore](#) (Arcadia Publishing, 2020). [remove this period or restructure the sentence] which commemorates the nation's largest registered African American historic district on Thursday (Jan. 21) at 7 p.m. To register and get the link, send an email to baltohistoryeve@gmail.com.

Merrill is an archivist who has collected over 30,000 artifacts, including photographs, rare books, folk art, documentaries, music, dolls, furniture, and quilts from the period in which the city of Baltimore was rigidly segregated. Merrill was a member of the [Chesapeake Collectibles](#) appraiser team on Maryland

Public Television for eight seasons and a Black Americana specialist on [Antiques Roadshow](#) for six seasons.

DPW Calendar is “in the mail”

Missing your 2021 calendar that usually arrives each December?

According to the Department of Public Works, it was mailed before the holidays and should arrive any day now. But it is no secret that the city’s US Postal Service deliveries have been derailed by staff and equipment cuts, national management upheavals and coronavirus cases. The calendar provides a wealth of important information — dates and times for scheduled DPW services, holiday closures and upcoming public events.

The calendar also contains schedule information for mechanical street sweeping, dates and locations for hazardous waste drop-off days and shredding events with discount recycle bin sales. The calendar is free. Residents who have not received a calendar within the next two weeks should call 311 to request one.

Residential recycling should resume Jan. 19

Mayor Scott has announced that the city’s curbside recycling collections, suspended since August because of manpower turnover associated with COVID-19 infections, are scheduled to resume next week. A DPW spokesman added that previous pickup schedules will return, so that if your day for the weekly pickup previously was Friday, for example, it will be Friday once again.

Fire extensively damages house on West Lanvale

A fire broke out in the 100 block of West Lanvale St., the first week of the new year, causing extensive damage to an 19th century occupied brick rowhouse residence. No one was injured.

“Our bay is destroyed, as well as windows, storm windows, walls, ceilings, rugs, antiques, etc. We cannot live here for 3-4 months,” an owner acknowledged. The fire apparently was caused by roofers who used a torch while installing a new rubber roof on the rear porch of the house. “Our house is boarded up and we would prefer not to have our names or address published because we won't be living here and don't want to encourage vandals”, the owner said.

If you have comments or questions about The Bulletin, use the form below, or email us at bulletin@boltonhillmd.org. We also welcome the submission of articles, events, and photos. This month’s edition was produced by Bill Hamilton, Paula Jackson, Kylie Perrotti, David Nyweide, Lee Tawney and others.

Bolton Hill

Community Association