



Eureka!

News for Eureka Valley, Upper Market,
Castro, Duboce & Twin Peaks. Published by the
Eureka Valley Promotion Association
Serving the neighborhood since 1881.

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www.EVPA.org

www.PinkTrianglePark.org

April is Dues Month

Last month, EVPA's by-laws were changed to make annual membership dues payable in April of every year, rather than at the anniversary date of joining the organization. This change will simplify budgeting and renewal processing for the Treasurer. New members joining after April will be given the option of paying a pro-rated amount. Existing members whose anniversary falls after April will also have this option.

Please simplify things for the EVPA Board by renewing your membership this coming April.

And while you are renewing, please let your neighbors know about EVPA and ask them to consider joining. They can read the newsletter online or pick up a copy at the Pink Triangle Park and Memorial or at Bazouzi's Market at the corner of Eureka and 19th Streets.

General Membership Meeting Minutes January 2007

1. Upon motion made and seconded, the November, 2006 General Membership Meeting Minutes were approved.
2. Upon motion made and seconded, Joe Caruso was elected to the EVPA Board of Directors.
3. Upon motion made and seconded, the by-laws were amended to make annual dues payable every April, rather than throughout the year. New members joining after April will be given the option of paying a pro-rata share of the dues. Members with questions should direct them to Treasurer David Weiss at developsmartusa@yahoo.com
4. Upon motion made and seconded, Board Member Demian Quesnel was authorized to represent EVPA for the Castro/Upper Market charette being conducted at the behest of Supervisor Bevan Dufty.

Upcoming EVPA Meetings

EVPA meetings are back in the Eureka Valley Recreation Center Auditorium, 100 Collingwood (behind Cala Foods). See you there!

February 15, March 15, and April 19

Castro Community on Patrol

**NOTE: This article first appeared in the
Bay Area Reporter.**

By Scott Wiener, Carlton Paul, and Kurt Cooper

The Castro is a unique place. It's one of the few places in the world where LGBT people can be ourselves. It's a neighborhood where we can live our lives – and show our love – without the fear of negative reactions and reprisals that so many in our community grew up experiencing on a daily basis. The Castro is our home. It's the one place where we're supposed to feel safe.

But, are we really safe in the Castro? Unfortunately, not as safe as many think. Although the Castro is by no means a dangerous neighborhood, it is not the bubble that many LGBT people assume it is. Attacks on our community on our home turf are nothing new. Gay bashers have targeted the Castro for decades. And, anyone who has lived or spent time here knows that crime is an issue. Indeed, in the past six months, three gay men have been raped in the Castro, all on or near 18th Street between Hartford and Sanchez – in the heart of our neighborhood. Robberies, home invasions, and gay bashings have continued to happen.

The police have responded admirably to these attacks, but they can only do so much, given limited resources. As a result, we need to watch out for our own. Castro residents, and LGBT people generally, need to keep an eye out to make sure that if our neighbors – our people – are attacked, they are not alone.

That is why we, and other like-minded people, organized Castro Community on Patrol (CCOP), a community-based, volunteer-driven organization. CCOP's simple but important missions are to patrol and keep an eye on our neighborhood, to help when problems arise, and to educate the community about how to stay safe. We work closely with the San Francisco Police Department, SF Safe, Community United Against Violence (CUAV), and Triangle Martial Arts to accomplish these goals.

CCOP's primary role is to patrol the Castro, both watching out for problems and creating a presence to help deter crime. Each Friday and Saturday night, three groups of three people monitor different areas of the Castro, extending from Duboce Park to 20th Street and from Church Street to Douglass Street. When the volun-

(Continued on page 3)

Corbett Heights Meeting Minutes

By Gary Weiss

The 3 main areas that were covered were the increased crime, completion of the utility underground work, and Saving the Corbett Slope.

Supervisor Bevan Dufty spoke. His office has managed to keep the Corbett Slope in limbo for the time being. The chair of the Land Use Committee – Supervisor Maxwell – has held off putting it on the agenda until Bevan tries a few more approaches to saving it. The latest approach is to look into trading it with another parcel in District 8. The other parcel would then be sold and ours would hopefully remain open space.

Next he touched on the homeless in Merritt Park. As most of you know, there are 3 homeless individuals who have made this park their home. The park has become their bedroom, their bathroom and their garbage can. We discussed a few ideas on how to trim or remove some of the vegetation. In another email I will ask for your ideas for the park – whether to trim or remove any of the trees and/or shrubbery.

Bevan then expressed how he shared our frustration about the O'Grady's Plumbing truck which hasn't moved in years. It's remained a billboard on wheels on Market Street across from the end of 18th Street. He's tried everything from having it towed (it was back the next day) to calling and speaking with the owner several times. The owner, Paul O'Grady, refuses to budge. Currently he has 2 trucks parked there. Then Paul O'Grady spoke. He said that we were all being unfair for not letting him alone – for even once letting the air out of his tires. He feels he has every right to be there – despite the hate and annoyance directed at him from the entire community. He stayed until the end of the meeting. Outside he continued to appeal to several of us. He admitted that *the Yellow Pages just got too expensive!* This is his advertising, and it has done well for him.

Next to speak was Nancy Wuerfel, who was appointed to the Parks and Open Space Advisory Council (PROSAC). She spoke of the merits of Open Space as it relates to our Corbett Slope. She said that many of the sites that we take for granted as being ours as city residents are actually in danger of being sold as "surplus property". She mentioned that the vista point parking area at the top of Portola that offers amazing views of downtown and the east bay may actually be up for grabs, as the city searches for ways to increase its number of affordable housing units. She stressed that we must be proactive in order to protect our neighborhoods, and not to expect that the city will always be looking out for us.

Next, Larry Ng and Jimi Harris from PG&E, and George Wilkerson from Mastec (the company that did most of the undergrounding work) discussed the remaining time-line for completion of the project, and the gas line work that has yet to be done. PG&E will begin gas service conversion work in the next week or so. This work needs

to take place as part of their gas line replacement program throughout the city. It could not be done in conjunction with the other work that has recently been completed. The purpose of this work is to upgrade the gas service for each property from the existing low pressure system to the newly installed high pressure system. *There is no cost to the homeowner.* They will notify us 5 days prior to the date when gas service will temporarily be interrupted. The work will take only one day per residence. At the completion of the work a PG&E gas serviceman will be sent out to re-light any gas appliances. If you have questions regarding this upcoming gas work, please call Doreen Martinez at 695-3277. Larry Ng's direct line is 695-3394.

After the gas work is complete, they will begin to connect all of the undergrounded systems. This should be complete by the end of April '07. The conversion of individual residences begins in May. The new streetlights will be installed by the summer, and removal of the old poles will take place in December. Add 3 months to all of the above so as not to be too disappointed.

Captain John Ehrlich spoke next. I invited him because of the incredibly increased crime in our neighborhood. He reinforced that *anything* suspicious needs to be reported. I mentioned that in the 18+ years I have lived in my home – with huge windows overlooking Mars and Corbett – I have never once seen a patrol car cruise by. He said they only cruise by neighborhoods that have an abundance of crime, and that our neighborhood has never qualified. I'd say there is a need for reevaluation!

I had invited Jane Warner of the SF Patrol Special Police to brief us on their services. My feeling is that since I have given up expecting much from the Police Dept. we may consider looking into hiring outside of the Dept. Having either a foot patrol, or especially a patrol car driving by on a regular basis, can be a great crime deterrent. I have a business in the Castro and use their services. I can't say enough positive things about the service they provide.

If we were to hire the Special Patrol, we would all be given a cell phone number to call if anything looked suspicious. If we can get 40 households willing to pay \$50 per month, an officer would be at our disposal for 2 hours a day, 5 days a week. In a separate email, I will try and find out how many of us are willing to pay this. Jane said that she's willing to work out some arrangement with us if we can't come up with the full amount. At \$48 per hour, it's a steal. Their website is: www.sfpatrolspecialpolice.com.

Thanks for your interest in your neighborhood!



Castro Patrol (Continued from page 1)

teer patrols observe problems – ranging from major issues like crimes in progress to lesser issues like burnt out streetlights that can lead to dark and dangerous backstreets – they report these problems. For crimes in progress (for example, one of our patrols recently observed an armed robbery of a store), volunteers are trained to call 911 and to write down what they see so that they can be good witnesses. For less time-sensitive situations, like the burnt out light, volunteers keep notes of the issues for later reporting to the appropriate City agency.

CCOP volunteers are not law enforcement personnel. We train volunteers, with participation from SFPD, not to get involved in crimes in progress as a police officer would. The patrols are not vigilantes. Rather, we are additional eyes and ears – good neighbors to keep an eye out on the neighborhood, to be visible, and to report problems so that they can be addressed.

The patrols also have the positive effect of creating a presence in the neighborhood. Whether in the busy areas of the Castro or the dark side streets, people see the patrols. They serve as a reminder that crime does occur in the Castro and that they need to be alert and aware – that they aren't automatically safe when they walk home at night. For those who don't have good intentions, they may think twice about victimizing our community.

The patrols serve an educational function as well. We stop and talk to people to make sure they are aware of the problems that have occurred. Unfortunately, many have not heard about the problems, meaning that education is that much more important. We also distribute whistles to people for use if they are attacked. We have distributed over a thousand whistles so far and are patterning the distribution after past efforts, such as the "Butterfly Brigade" of the 1980s and CUAV's program in the 1990s.

Castro Community on Patrol can be a long-term, highly effective way for our community to protect and care for each other – to help reverse the modern urban trend of people having no idea, and not particularly caring about, what is going on with their neighbors. However, to accomplish this goal and to ensure that the patrols are sustainable, we will need many volunteers on an ongoing basis – volunteers to patrol and volunteers to help with logistics.

We encourage residents and non-residents alike to join us and to ensure that CCOP becomes a long-term building block in this neighborhood that we all own.

Scott Wiener, Carlton Paul, and Kurt Cooper are board members of Castro Community on Patrol. To sign up, to contribute, or to get involved generally, email castrocommunityonpatrol@comcast.net.

The Evolution of The Castro as a Gay Neighborhood in the 1970's

by Demian Quesnel

I wrote this article for an Urban Studies class at San Francisco State University in the Fall of 1999. As it is about the Castro in the 1970's, most of the information is still accurate. I would love feedback, especially from those who were here in that period, and am curious who will identify what information is no longer accurate. Please email me at dquesnel@usa.net.

The Castro District of San Francisco is known to gay people all over the world as a "gay mecca". It wasn't always so. San Francisco has a history of being a diverse and liberal, tolerant city since the Gold Rush days. Several gay researchers have found evidence of gay life in San Francisco as far back as the 1870's. By the late 1960's the gay presence in San Francisco was such that the political candidates were courting the gay vote by attending the meetings of S.I.R. (The Society for Individual Rights) and vowing to support changes in the laws that discriminated against gay people. The Los Angeles Advocate, a national gay publication, stated in its July 1968 issue "there is no police harassment of any bars or gay functions here (in San Francisco). The city has about 75 gay bars, baths, after-hours places, and restaurants". However, the Castro had no visibility at that point in the history of the City. The gay areas (such as they were at that point in time) were primarily the Tenderloin and Upper Grant Avenue in North Beach and Polk Street. There were also quite a few gay bars in the then industrial area known as South Of Market, now known as SOMA.

Castro Street was named for the family of Joaquin Isidro de Castro, a soldier of de Anza's company who arrived in 1776 at what subsequently became the city of San Francisco. When the de Anza expedition arrived, Market and Castro was already a crossroads on Indian trails between water holes. It soon evolved as an intersection on the horse trail between the Presidio and Mission Dolores". In the 1880's the area was mainly settled by Irish, German, and Scandinavian immigrant families who established dairy farms on land that had once formed part of the José Castro Rancho during California's period of Mexican rule. When the Market Street Cable Railway opened its Castro Street line in 1887, the farmland was quickly converted into residential and commercial real estate. The Victorian homes that still characterize the neighborhood soon filled the valleys and covered the hills. By the early 20th century the neighborhood was known as Eureka Valley and had a predominately Irish flavor. It was known as a good place for people of modest means to raise a family. In the years following WWII, however, the availability of cheap FHA home loans and the development of freeways spawned a vast migration to the suburbs rapidly growing in the Bay Area. By the early 1960's, Eureka Valley had fallen victim to the economic blight that increasingly plagued America's urban centers. "Ernie Asten, president of the merchants association and lifetime Castro resident, says, 'It was a fairly sleepy, sluggish business district. Things were sort of depressed'. He estimates 10 to 20 percent of the stores on Castro then (in the beginning of the 1970's decade) were vacant. The demand for the long neglected housing was equally weak"

Gay men began moving into the neighborhood largely drawn by the inexpensive Victorian houses being sold by the families moving to the suburbs. There were lots of "fixer-upper" opportunities in the area sometimes referred to as "welfare gulch" by early gay settlers to the district. Additionally the neighborhood was in a sunny part of the city and was central to public transportation. In the late 1960's the neighborhood had also attracted a number of refugees from the Haight-Ashbury district and was also known as a tolerant, safe neighborhood, open to a diversity of people.

I first became aware of the neighborhood in 1970 when a friend of mine took me to a gay bar, The Pendulum, on 18th St. just above Castro St. and we ate at the South China Café across the street. The earliest documented gay bar in the area was the Missouri Mule which opened on Market St. near Castro St. in 1963. By 1970 there were still only a few gay bars in the area and 1 non-bar gay hangout named Andy's Donuts.

It was a small gay community when I first moved to the neighborhood in July of 1971. I remember a distinct small town atmosphere that I took to immediately. It seemed that you soon knew most of the people in the neighborhood and easily became a member of the community. Most of the people seemed to get along well and accept each other. However, I remember an incident when the owner of Andy's Donuts put up a sign that stated "No Hippies, Faggots or Prostitutes". The sign was only up for 1 day, but it was a small community and word quickly spread that Andy didn't want our business, so the crowd moved down the street to The Castro Café.

I started to work at The Castro Café in May of 1972. The Castro Café had become the most popular non-bar gay hangout in the area. Most gay people who either lived in the neighborhood or came to the neighborhood to frequent one of the increasing number of gay bars, at least stopped in The Castro Café for a coffee or a snack if not a meal. I worked off and on at the Castro Café until sometime in 1979.

The number of gay bars in the neighborhood increased rapidly and as more gay people moved to the neighborhood more of the businesses had either gay owners or gay employees. It was interesting to watch the transformation of the businesses in the neighborhood and to notice that as more of the potential customers were openly gay men, the businesses that either catered to or were at least friendly to these gay men thrived and the businesses that were not friendly to gay people withered and closed. I remember that in the early days (I think it was 1972 or 1973) there was a pharmacy on the corner of Castro and 18th (I believe it was named Johnson's Pharmacy) and there was another Pharmacy across the street named The Starr Pharmacy. There was a woman working in The Starr Pharmacy named Jackie Starr (co-incidental last name) who was very gay friendly and the people in Johnson's Pharmacy were not particularly gay friendly. It didn't take long before The Starr Pharmacy was thriving and Johnson's Pharmacy closed. Another example was a clothing store named "The Family Store" which was located several doors from the Castro Café. The woman who owned it was very gay UN-friendly. Across the street, a clothing store opened named the "All American Boy", owned by a gay couple. As the number of shoppers in the neighborhood were increasingly gay men, the Family Store's

business declined and the All American Boy's business increased (to the point that the owners were able to open stores in New York City and Los Angeles). The Family Store closed and the owner, who had been very active in the neighborhood business association, disappeared from the scene. There were also a number of local business people who seemed at first to not really take to the changing character of the neighborhood. It was interesting to see the change in attitude of some of these people when they realized that their business survival depended on it. According to my recollection, the majority of the business people in the neighborhood took people at face value and didn't treat them differently according to their perception of them as gay or straight, but rather treated them as neighbors.

More gay bars opened in the neighborhood, so that by 1973 nearly 30 had come and gone. Additionally gay restaurants and retail establishments opened as well, and gay people became increasingly active in the economic life of the area. When Harvey Milk found the Eureka Valley Merchants Association wouldn't admit gay members, Harvey joined with the nice folks at Cliff's Variety to start the rival Castro Village Association as an alternative to the traditionally conservative Eureka Valley Merchants Association. It had only one heterosexual member, Ernie Asten, who was later instrumental (in 1978) in the merger of the two merchants groups. The resultant organization was MUMC.

The Castro Street Fair was significant in promoting the neighborhood to gay people and to the rest of the city. It was "born in the back room of Harvey Milk's camera store in 1974. At that point three other San Francisco neighborhoods (Upper grant Avenue, Union and Polk Streets) held summer street fairs to promote local businesses and craftspeople. The Castro Street Fair added live music and also included neighborhood, community and political groups alongside the craft booths. Recent years have seen attendance at the 100,000 person level and both the Castro Street Fair and Halloween on Castro Street have become, alongside Chinese New Year and the Bay to Breakers, "only in San Francisco" outdoor extravaganzas attended by gays and straights, locals and tourists.

By 1974 the Castro was acknowledged by the gay press as one of the important gay areas in the country. In the August 1974 After Dark (a national entertainment magazine) it is stated that "it's (Castro St.'s) neighborhood is one of the city's largest gay ghettos...Crowded into these two blocks is an incredible assortment of counter-culture capitalism..." In the June 1979 After Dark issue it is stated, "Eureka Valley has become something of a national gay capital. Estimates range from a too-conservative third to an exaggerated eighty percent for the proportion of gays residing in the valley bounded roughly by Market and Church Streets on the North and east respectively and by Twenty-first and Eureka Streets to the south and west. Most of Eureka valley's old-timers view the change to gay predominance as beneficial. They point out that empty storefronts have given way to smart, new shops. They point with pride to once-ramshackle frame houses that now line the steep streets as Technicolored gingerbread delights...Today, four out of five of the businesses on Castro Street are gay". By 1979 the local non-gay press was also writing of the district as "prevailingly homosexual". "It wasn't so long ago that national gay magazines referred

to Castro as San Francisco's Christopher Street, identifying it with Manhattan's better known gay way. Today (1979), those magazines need only mention the name Castro; their readers know what and where it is". It was also described as "one of the more cosmopolitan neighborhoods in San Francisco, a lively, trendy, ever growing bourse".

In 1978 the president of the EVPA (the Castro area resident's group) was an openly gay man named Frank Fitch who had been a resident in Eureka Valley since 1971. The Association, at that point in time, was approximately one-third gay. This association was quite active with committees on: streets and transportation; litter; education; arts; health; zoning and planning; parking; and membership. "Just as gays and straights live side by side in houses and apartments, cooperating in the EVPA they work hand in hand to make their neighborhood a better place for single men and women and families to live. And nobody makes a fuss about who's gay or straight, or even who might be.

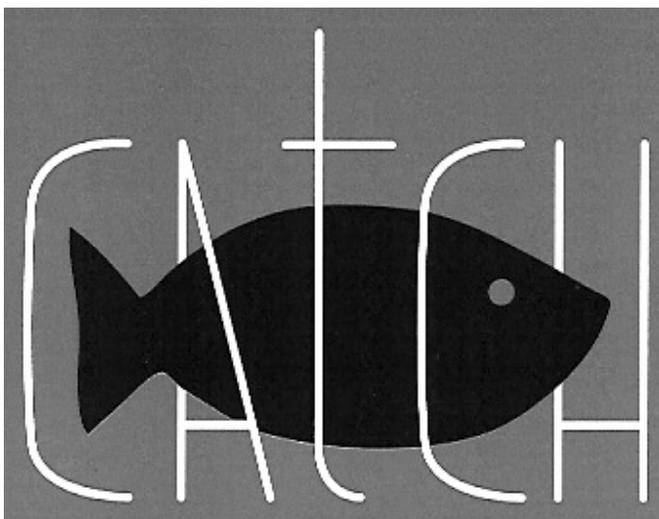
In the October 1979 "Neighborhood Commercial Conservation And Development" report issued by the San Francisco Department of City Planning, the Castro Street study area is described as follows: "No longer a quiet commercial district providing primarily convenience goods to the community, the Castro and 18th area has undergone rapid economic and population changes in the past 10 years. Now a congested hub of commercial activity, Castro Street draws clientele from within the immediate neighborhood and the broader San Francisco community...The Castro district is more intensely used compared to the other neighborhood commercial study areas (Union St., Sacramento St., Upper Fillmore St., Haight St., Upper market St. West, Upper Market St. East, 24th St. (Noe), 24th St. (Mission), Valencia St.). A total of 11 bars, 28 restaurants, 21 clothing stores, 11 off-sale liquor and grocery stores, 52 offices and 190 residential units are clustered in the 7 block (study) area".

The evolution of The Castro as an identifiably gay neighborhood occurred in less than a decade. At the beginning of the 1970's there were undoubtedly gay people living in the Castro as they lived all over San Francisco. However at that point in time even the gay press didn't acknowledge The Castro as a particularly gay area. In fact at that point in time The Castro wasn't even referred to as "The Castro" at all, but rather as Eureka Valley (the Municipal designation). In a short period of time, most likely beginning in 1971 or 1972 and definitely gaining significant momentum by 1974, the neighborhood went from being a depressed, sleepy "welfare gulch" to being the "gay mecca" that it was by 1979.

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Supervisor Bevan Dufty's Office 554-6968
bevan.dufty@sfgov.org
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Join EVPA by Sending Us This Completed Membership Application

Name: _____
First *Last*

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Organization: _____

Address: _____ Apt. _____
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(EVPA does not share your contact information with other groups)

My concerns for the neighborhood include _____

I am interested in working on the following issues:

___ City Planning/Zoning ___ Transportation, Utilities & Neighborhood Commerce

___ Public Health/Safety ___ Education/Recreation ___ Membership & Promotion

___ Finance ___ Internal Affairs ___ Pink Triangle Park

___ **Renewing membership.** ___ **New membership.**

___ I wish to receive my copy of the Eureka! Via the internet rather than by US Mail

Annual Membership dues are \$20 per calendar year for individuals, \$30 for households and \$40 for businesses or nonprofits in Castro, Upper Market, and Duboce Triangle (Eureka Valley). EVPA is a non-profit California corporation. Please return this form with your check payable to EVPA to:
EVPA, PO Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114-0137

EVPA P.O. Box 14137
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www.EVPA.org www.PinkTrianglePark.org



General Membership Meeting
Thursday, February 15, 2007 7:30pm
Eureka Valley Recreation Center
100 Collingwood St.

AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Approval of minutes
3. Budget (Action Item)
4. Committee Reports, including:
--Update on the Market/Octavia Plan
--Update on the Upper Market/Castro Charette
5. Discussion of EVPA Kiosk Proposal

