Correction:
Upper Market/Castro Farmers Market
In the March edition of the Eureka!, we mistakenly stated that the Farmer’s Market is being coordinated by the Upper Market Alliance. It is actually being coordinated by the Merchants of Upper Market and Castro, MUMC. Our apologies for this inadvertent mistake, and a big thanks to MUMC, its president Steve Adams, and J.D. Petras of Café Flore for the great work on this project.

Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy
By Sande Leigh, Principal

On June 25, 1996, San Francisco Unified School District’s Board of Education voted to change the name of Douglass Traditional School on 19th and Collingwood to Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy. Supervisor Harvey Milk was assassinated along with Mayor George Moscone in 1978. Then Supervisor Tom Ammiano (currently State Assemblyman) spearheaded a struggle to rename the school - in Harvey’s neighborhood and a block from his camera shop - that lasted 18 years. It took so long simply because of a backlash to naming a public elementary school after a gay man, even one so heroic as Harvey Milk. Principal Sande Leigh, a long time teacher in SFUSD and former Principal at Alvarado Elementary School just over the hill, was the first principal named to the new school.

Since then the school, dedicated to Harvey Milk, has worked hard to maintain his legacy through educating for social justice. The mission, as the school defined it, would be to empower student learning by: teaching tolerance, non-violence and respect for human rights; celebrating our diversity; achieving academic excellence; building strong family-school-community connections; understanding lessons from the civil rights, social justice and peace movements. Harvey Milk was a progressive politician, a grass roots coalition-builder, and a civil rights activist. By teaching young children these lessons, the school works to carry out Harvey’s message of hope and to help create a different, more open citizenry of the future.

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Lots of Great Things Happening in the Neighborhood
By Scott Wiener, EVPA President

As always, this neighborhood is active and vibrant, with lots of great activities and ideas swirling around. And, as always, the Eureka Valley Promotion Association is helping to move the neighborhood forward.

On Saturday April 18, folks from around the neighborhood came together on Earth Day to clean up the Castro. The work was not glamorous, but it will help make the neighborhood more attractive and safer. We filled in tree-wells that had gotten too low. We scraped some nasty tape off of the light poles and then repainted the poles. We picked up trash. And so forth. It was a great effort, and special thanks to Andrea Aiello of the Castro/Upper Market Community Benefit District for working with the Department of Public Works to put it all together.

On Wednesday April 29, the Castro had its inaugural Farmer’s Market on Noe Street between Market and Beaver. It was a wonderful event -- great attendance, great energy, and great food. The Farmer’s Market will happen every Wednesday from 4-8 until October. Farmers from around the region will bring their wares to the neighborhood, providing us with a broad array of fresh produce. Hundreds of farmers applied for the several dozen available slots, which speaks volumes about the attractiveness of doing-business in the Castro. The Farmer’s Market will help local businesses, by drawing foot traffic into the neighborhood, and will be a great community-building exercise by providing a public space for people to get to know each other. A big thanks to the Merchants of Upper Market and Castro (MUMC) for taking the lead on this project, and for J.D. Petras of Café Flore for playing a big role as well.

On May 30, Corbett Neighbors will hold a block party on Ord Street to celebrate the end of the undergrounding and street repaving process (which was interminable) for Corbett Street. EVPA is committed to increasing the number of block parties in the neighborhood, and we are thrilled that Corbett Neighbors is moving forward on May 30.

Finally, Supervisor Dufty and DPW Director Ed Reiskin came to the last EVPA meeting to present on the upcoming experimental and reversible closure of 17th Street between Castro and the end of the F Market platform. This closure will create additional open space for public gathering in the heart of the Castro. Pedestrians will share the space with the F Market, but there will no longer be vehicular traffic. EVPA voted to support the project. Some neighbors have expressed concerns about the closure, including impact on traffic on Hartford Street as well as the potential for the space to become a gathering place for homeless people and late-night revelers. We’re confident that we’ll be able to work out these issues so that we can increase open space in the Castro without impacting neighbors’ quality of life.

Make sure to join us at the next EVPA meeting on Thursday May 21 at 7:30 at the Castro Community Room, 501 Castro Street.
The Proposed Rainbow Honor Walk  
By Isak Lindenauer

I’ve been a resident and a merchant in the Castro for the last thirty years. I guess that makes me an old timer. I want to tell you about an idea that’s been brewing in my brain for the last six months: the Rainbow Honor Walk. I came to the Castro to be free. To the Castro where Harvey Milk walked the streets and a new sort of neighborhood was in the historic process of reforming itself. I had come here many times before: to march against the Briggs initiative and Anita Bryant’s madness and; as luck would have it, that very day, I found a little place which had my name on it. I became a merchant with a shop in the Castro.

For two or three years, along with freedom and merchantry, I indulged in a new and wild, sexual abandon. A regular I had befriended at the Ritch Street baths had come down with a mysterious disease that was soon worrying everyone who went there. The years of Aids had begun, which rapidly started to take its incredible toll on my generation of gay men. Week after week, here in arguably the hardest hit city, we all saw double pages of the B.A.R. filled with the names of what eventually became thousands among us: family, friends, lovers, neighbors, fellow merchants. The media chose to call it a gay plague while they and the rest of straight America left us alone to tend to one another and help one another die. Who can ever forget the worst years of it with people dead and dying in every apartment here, in every shop, and the rest of us horrified participants in the daily and seemingly unending loss. Would all of us die before it was over? Not quite.

Years passed and this tough little neighborhood fought, persevered, and survived. In the last ten, there has been a renaissance here. New shops, another younger generation of men and women, new blood raging in the first full flush of its freedom and the Castro lives on, renewed, unvanquished, triumphant and more fabulous than ever.

This then, is the context in which I come to you with this idea which can give us individual pride, pride in our community, and can create commerce in our neighborhood in a very positive way at a time when it is greatly needed. It can educate generations of younger gay people who have little knowledge of what coming out was like for us, who take for granted much of what we fought so hard for. I’ve called it the rainbow honor walk, a bit like the Hollywood “Walk of Fame” with the names of movie stars, but here instead rainbows and the names of great LGBT women and men who HAVE lived or ARE living their lives out in the open, who advance freedom and beauty, and everyone’s freedom through their example, from the varied worlds of the arts, entertainment, politics, sports, and science; their names on our streets, a rainbow behind each one, celebrating our diversity, intelligence, courage, and worth. If it becomes a reality, as people walk through our neighborhood, they will see these names on the sidewalks and while looking will inevitably stop in stores to shop or restaurants to eat.

In recent years, we have struggled to make the rainbow a symbol which is immediately identifiable with LGBT people and that effort has worked. The straight world recognizes our rainbow which has great advertising cachet and power. We should continue to take advantage of that, use it and reinforce its impact every chance we get. It reaches through all the fear and hatred, the red and black journalism, to the American people. In it they see us as a group of people of many colors and both sexes, banded together as one.

We could create a directory of the honorees, perhaps at the GLBT Historical Society which now graces the corner of Eighteenth and Castro and which I for one hope will stay in our neighborhood. Their names, photographs or drawings, and brief histories or biographies along with their locations on the walk could be housed there, so people who came to our neighborhood to see the rainbow walk could locate each person’s name, read about why he or she was chosen to be there and then be able to walk on both sides of Castro and eighteenth street in all four directions. On both sides of eighteenth, to Noe in one direction, and Collingwood in the other. Up Castro past Harvey’s old camera shop to nineteenth street, and right on nineteenth up past Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy. And at Castro at eighteenth again, up both sides of the street toward Market, and down Market along both sides as far as we see fit to go, many names, here on the streets where we work and live.
The school is extremely diverse, drawing students from all over the city. It is approximately 33% African American, 25% Latino, 20% Caucasian, 10% Asian, and 12% other. The school has a high percentage of students at poverty-level (52%). It is also an “inclusion” school, where students with a variety of learning abilities and challenges are included in the general ed classroom. With this incredible diversity and all these challenges, the school has managed to raise its test scores, making a huge 100 point leap, and is working at really closing the achievement gap between high performing and low performing students.

The Castro Community has been a strong and proud supporter of the school over the years. There are school partnerships with local businesses and agencies, community volunteers in the classrooms, and fundraisers supported by merchants, neighbors and friends. Many in the Castro have come to see Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy as THEIR little school. Principal Leigh has had a lot to do with bringing the Castro community into the school and making the school an integral part of the neighborhood. She opened the doors of the school to volunteers and as community meeting space, while bringing the children to parade down Castro on Halloween and bringing families to the corner of 19th and Castro to hold the gate for the Street Fair every October. She is also lives in the neighborhood and is a regular at many Castro businesses.

Principal Leigh is retiring in June and moving to New Orleans to go back to teaching in the classroom. The school will be facing many changes and new challenges. We want to make sure we continue to support this little school that could (and did)!! In the name of Harvey Milk and all he stood for, let’s keep supporting Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy, the kids who attend there, and the new Principal in the Fall.

Principal Leigh is inviting the whole community to help celebrate her retirement by coming to a BLOCK PARTY on Saturday, June 6, 6:00-10:00 in front of the school on 19th street! There will be music, food, beverage and fun! Everyone is invited!
Minutes from the March 19, 2009, EVPA general membership meeting

The president called the meeting to order at 7:30. Those present introduced themselves. The president introduced Ken Stram of the LGBT Community Center and Kirsten Fletcher, a commercial real estate broker, who spoke to the organization about business development in the Castro and the issue of vacancies. They discussed efforts being made to fill vacancies, the business attraction program (co-sponsored by the Center, MUMC, and the CBD), and what the neighborhood can do to help. A discussion occurred around these issues.

Supervisor Bevan Dufty and Dept. of Public Works Director Ed Reiskin spoke to the organization about the proposed reversible closure of 17th St. between Castro and Hartford Streets. The plan is to effectuate the closure by May. The membership discussed the proposal, and on motion and second, the membership voted to support it.

Andrea Aiello of the CBD spoke about the Community Clean Team event in the Castro on Saturday April 18, which EVPA is co-sponsoring. Volunteers will focus on various clean-up projects in the neighborhood. RSVP at the CBD’s website (www.castrocbd.org).

The membership discussed joining the Housing Action Coalition. The pros and cons were considered, and on motion and second the membership voted to join HAC.

The president announced the upcoming April 26 Neighborhood Parks Council open space planning meeting at Davies Medical Center.

Various other announcements were made. The meeting adjourned at 9.

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**Type of Membership:**
- Individual: $20.00
- Household (2 people): $30.00
- Business: $40.00

This is a: 
- [X] new membership
- [ ] renewal

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- [ ] I want to be listed in the online roster when available
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- [ ] City Planning
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- [ ] Advertising in the Eureka!
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- [ ] Other ________

**My concerns for my neighborhood include:** ____________________________________________

EVPA recognizes that there are many geographically focused neighborhood associations in Eureka Valley. We welcome involvement in EVPA by members of these groups. Share your groups’ news with EVPA membership in a future issue of the Eureka! Email Alan.Beach@evpa.org.
Don’t Miss Out!
Renew your EVPA Membership today!
Memberships expire April 15!
To renew: Return form on page 5 OR http://evpa.org/join

EVPA
PO Box 14137
San Francisco, CA 94114
address service requested
www.evpa.org

Agenda
Eureka Valley Promotion Association
General Membership Meeting
May 21, 2009, 7:30 to 9 PM

501 Castro (above BofA)

1. Introductions
2. Approval of the minutes
3. Treasurer’s report
4. President’s report
   a. Rainbow Honor Walk presentation
      (Isak Lindenerauer)
5. Committee reports
   a. Public Spaces
      i. Community Clean Team in Castro
   b. SF PUC transmission main improvement project
   iii. Farmer’s Market – 4/29 opening
   b. Newsletter
   i. Distribution and ads
   ii. Castro Courier
   c. Planning Committee
   i. Discretionary Review (DR) reform update
   ii. Other projects
   d. Upper Market Alliance
   e. Coalition of San Francisco Neighborhoods
   f. HAC
   g. Block Party
   h. Membership
   i. Homelessness
6. New business
7. Announcements & neighbor updates

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