Corbett Slope Community Garden
By Gary Weiss, Corbett Heights Neighbors President and EVNA Treasurer

For decades, this almost 18,000-square-foot open space has been gardened and cared for by the Corbett Heights neighborhood. It’s located in the 300 block of Corbett, extending all the way down to Market Street but only accessible from Corbett. In the early 80’s it was fenced off by the city, primarily to protect people from slipping on the steeper portions. Since then it had become covered with weeds – some over 7 feet tall, as well as trash and dozens of dog poop bags that were just tossed over the fence.

In 2005, Supervisor Chris Daly wrote the “Surplus Property” ordinance which asked all city departments to submit a list of any unused land in their jurisdictions. There would then be hearings held by the Mayor’s Office of Housing to determine whether any of the sites would be acceptable for affordable housing. In the case of the Corbett Slope, it was valuable but, due to its steepness, would be too expensive to build affordable housing. It was decided that the land would be transferred to the Department of Real Estate through which it would be sold to a developer who would build market-rate housing. The proceeds would go into a “bank” for future use to build affordable housing.

During the hearings Corbett Heights neighborhood suddenly realized that this much beloved, tree-covered piece of land – the only open space left – could disappear. Hundreds of letters were written. We stood for half a day with signs and several newspaper articles were written about it. We even tried landmarking several of the very mature trees. Since the determination the land has remained, and the weeds and trash have proliferated.

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In EVNA’s October newsletter we reported that SFMTA had installed a gate on the lot. This event was greeted with great relief from the neighbors who were still being woken up at 2:00 a.m. on any given night. The lot appeared to be less of a nuisance.

To our great dismay however, in mid November the gate was smashed through and severely damaged. This only reinforced our belief that the parking lot had become a place where drunken visitor to the Castro have little respect for our neighborhood, its businesses and/or residents.

According to SFPD patrols, the clear majority of people in the parking lot at night are not San Francisco residents.

Gate Crashing: Castro Parking Lot Update
By Rob Cox, EVNA Board Member

In January of 2011 a group of neighbors convened with Supervisor-Elect Wiener, SFMTA, CBD, Castro After Dark and SFPD to come up with a solution to the ongoing problem of disturbances in the Castro parking lot. The disturbances have been getting worse and more frequent in the past few years.

It was agreed that the lot would be closed after 1:00 a.m. and reopened at 7:00 a.m. Patrol Special would close the lot, SFPD would ticket vehicles remaining in the lot and CBD would open the lot. Beginning in June using temporary barriers the lot was being closed on a nightly basis.

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This can also be reflected in the up-tick in crime throughout the neighborhood with wallets, purses and phones being snatched at the local bars and clubs.

A group of neighbors is now convening to raise money to repair and replace the gate with better and stronger material.

For more information contact Rob Cox at: rob.cox@evna.org
Supervisor Wiener Showcases District 8 Artists at City Hall

Since entering office last year Supervisor Wiener has showcased local District 8 artists on his office walls at City Hall. The showcases are curated by Shannon Trimble, a neighbor and former San Francisco gallery director. Currently Augusta Talbot and Rob Cox have their work hanging in Supervisor Wiener’s office.

Augusta Talbot was born in New York City. She received a BFA in painting from The Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia. Talbot has exhibited in museums and galleries across the country.

Her work is about counting, which of course involves many things: daily time, calendrical time, calculation, measure, ratio, the ticks of the clock and the beats of the heart, our “pulses” both physical and abstract. Her sculpture and the works on paper explore questions of navigation, entanglement, buried memory, enfolding of forms within forms and the tension between opacity and transparency.

Rob Cox was born outside of Boston, MA. He received his B.F.A. in Painting and Art History from the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston. Cox has exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the Country. He paints the landscape as well as figures and everyday objects.

Rob’s work is a Pop style with muddy underpinnings. It is strongly influenced by the Northern California figurative tradition. Recently Rob was honored to be selected two years in a row to be a contributing artist for Heroes & Hearts, the SF General Hospital’s annual fundraiser.

Shannon Trimble curates the exhibits. Shannon was the Director of the Braunstein/Quay Gallery for 12 years and has been actively involved in the Art Community since the late 1980s. He has curated over 100 exhibitions and is actively involved in the community as Curator for Scott’s office as well as volunteering for Central City Hospitality House’s annual auction. Shannon has a degree in English Literature from San Francisco State and was raised (for the most part) in the Central Valley.

Please join Supervisor Wiener at a reception for the Artists.
Date: Thursday, February 2nd
Time: 5:00-6:30pm
THE CAFÉ is committed to ensuring that the Castro has a vibrant and active nightlife and a peaceful neighborhood.

All who live, work and play in our neighborhood deserve a positive and healthy community.

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Our Historic Streets

By Dan Risman Jones and Steven Huang

Ever wonder about the origins of our neighborhood street names? In particular, who were Castro, Sanchez, Guerrero, Noe and Valencia? More important, just who decided on these street names? In the case of many of the streets in our neighborhood, it was one man who came to California in 1846.

John Meirs Horner, born 1821, was a Mormon hailing from New Jersey. He and his followers set off on a chartered ship named Brooklyn to come to the Mexican city of Yerba Buena (now known as San Francisco) to escape the persecution that they suffered under U.S. federal law. The fateful migrants arrived in Yerba Buena as the city was undergoing growing pains. The western territory was about to come under U.S. control at the conclusion of the Mexican-American War in 1848 and the Gold Rush was about to begin. The Mexican mayor of that time, José de Jesús Noé, was unseated and the city’s name was then changed to San Francisco.

Noé was the owner of Rancho San Miguel, made up of thousands of acres of land adjacent to Yerba Buena that today comprise about one-sixth of San Francisco. In 1853, Horner purchased 5,285 acres from Noé, including most of what is today the neighborhoods of Eureka Valley and Noe Valley (from 18th to 30th Streets and from Castro Street to San Jose Avenue).

Horner went on to survey and to plot his land as well as to extend the existing city streets into the new neighborhoods. Due to an economic downturn in the 1850s, Horner was forced to sell this land at a loss and almost completely undeveloped. However, his surveys and plots survived, and the streets were laid out and named as Horner had envisioned.

Horner named the north-south-running streets after prominent local families. Castro, Sanchez, Guerrero, and Valencia were settlers or soldiers in the original settlement party of 1776. Descendants of Sanchez and Guerrero went on to become mayors of Yerba Buena. Castro’s grandson went on to become governor and general of “Alta California” under the Mexican empire. As mentioned above, Noé, who arrived in Yerba Buena in 1834, was the last mayor of Yerba Buena.

Horner named all the East-West streets after religious and personally important figures. Though today many of these streets were renamed with numbers, several still exist. These street names include Elizabeth (after his wife), Jersey (after his place of birth), Clipper (after the type of ship Horner used to sail around Cape Horn from the East Coast to West Coast), Duncan (after a prominent Mormon), Valley, and, until recently, Army (now Cesar Chavez).

Though Horner himself is not prominently featured in the annals of San Francisco, his legacy lives on through the streets that he named. Furthermore, some local landowners might vaguely recall seeing his name. That is because city plot maps today still call this area Horner’s Addition.

**Above:** Eureka Valley looking West toward Twin Peaks, circa 1900

**Left:** Eureka Valley view from Corbett Heights, circa 1890
Why I support Pink Triangle Park
By Lisa Ryers, SF City Guides Volunteer Tour Guide

As a San Francisco City Guide concentrating on the Eureka Valley neighborhood, my job is to share my love of the city and its historic stories with visitors and locals alike. This year alone we provided this service to nearly 2000 walkers. As always, we give these tours for free.

After a preliminary introduction at the Rainbow Flag at Castro and Market, I routinely bring my groups to Pink Triangle Park as a second stop on our 90-minute tours. Most people don’t know about this park, the only Civil Rights monument of its kind in the United States created to memorialize what is believed to be the over 15,000 gay men killed by the Nazi Regime. Fifteen triangular pillars with pink quartz insets punctuate the site. At your feet you will find a blanket of rose quartz stones bordered in a metal triangle.

Recently we noticed that the number of stones was scant. (People are encouraged to take a stone in remembrance of the park.) I didn’t realize that the cost to replenish the stones is $750 and that the funds are not always at the ready.

At our recent City Guides meeting I made this reality known and several guides contributed money to help maintain the park. The stones are visual stunners that create beauty in light of a grave theme.

When I visit the park, I think of my great-grandfather who was one of the first prisoners taken to Sachsenhausen concentration camp north of Berlin in 1936. As a Jewish socialist, he wore the yellow double triangle and the red triangle. The pink triangle was not his label. But if you combine red and yellow you get a deep shade of pink. To me, Pink Triangle Park reminds us not only of the homosexual men who were lost, but of entire communities that would have embraced them.

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New Rules Due for Castro/Market Plazas
by Andrea Aiello, Executive Director, Castro/Upper Market Community Benefit District

Plaza Legislation
Legislation establishing rules for the Jane Warner and Harvey Milk Plazas will be heard in the Land Use Committee on January 23, 2012 at 1:00 p.m.

It’s spring 2009, and the City takes a leap and experiments with The Pave-ment to Parks Program, bringing small oases of seating and greenery into the middle of car-dominated urban spaces. The Jane Warner Plaza, the first of these parks, closes a very dangerous intersection and dedicates it to trees, grasses and public seating. In the excitement and rush to get these parks installed, no rules are established, but it’s clear they do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department. The Castro/Upper Market Community Benefit District (Castro CBD) scrambles to manage this new space, keeping it clean and thriving. The Castro CBD’s cleaning company graciously adds this to their responsibilities at no extra cost and the CBD recruits volunteers for other daily maintenance issues. The Plaza is maintained on a shoestring budget, and only makes it because of the dedication and volunteer help provided by the neighboring residents and businesses. To ensure the Plaza continues to thrive and be enjoyed by all residents, visitors and tourists, some rules have to be established.

The Castro CBD took the lead and in the winter of 2011, began talking to the residents and merchants who border the Plaza and to engaged City agencies. Many of the fixes suggested were already in established legislation governing public spaces, in the Parks Code; yet the Plaza was not included. Simultaneously, there were multiple complaints about garbage, noise, drunken and drugged behavior and human excrement at Harvey Milk Plaza.

It was decided to develop legislation, mainly Parks Code, specifically for the management of these two public spaces. Hours that the moveable seating is available was included to enable the CBD to continue maintaining the tables and chairs. To ensure a healthy and smoke-free space for those using the Plazas, San Francisco’s legislation governing smoking in public spaces and parks was included. As in parks, camping will not be allowed. The legislation also prohibits sleeping, large shopping carts, vendors without a permit from the City, and “garden- ing” by anyone other than those who are authorized. (If you would like to help maintain the plants in either of the plazas, please contact Andrea Aiello, CBD Executive Director. continued on page 7
Corbett Slope Continued from front page 1

One day about a year ago I requested permission from DPW and the Dept. of Real Estate to go in and begin a cleanup. We were joined by KitchenGardenSF and the SF Permaculture Guild. Plans were drawn up for a Community Garden. We hope to have areas of vegetables, fruit trees, native plants—all connected with a series of paths and stairways. We’ve had several work days so far with another planned for January 14.

Our fiscal sponsor is the SF Parks Alliance, so liability insurance is covered. Last month, Supervisor Scott Wiener proposed transferring the land back to DPW. The first of two hearings took place in mid-December and it passed 6-5. The second hearing will be January 10, 2012. If it’s approved, DPW will provide water for our work on the Slope.

There has been some objection to this transfer from a group of affordable housing advocates, who rightly feel that the city is desperate for more affordable housing. The sale of this property would have reaped about $2 million—maybe more. The problem we have is that there is a small and dwindling supply of open space left in San Francisco. We feel that eliminating this valuable and cherished piece of land would diminish quality of life. It needs to remain green for all future generations of San Franciscans to enjoy.

New Rules Continued from page 6

The legislation was introduced by Supervisor Wiener on November 15th and will be heard in the Land Use Committee on January 23rd at 1:00 p.m. Committee meetings are open to the public, and anyone interested and available is encouraged to attend. If you cannot attend, but would like to show your support for this legislation or share your concerns with the Supervisor, you can reach him at Scott.Wiener@sfgov.org or by phone at 415-554-6968. You can also contact Andrea Aiello with the Castro CBD at execdirector@castrocbd.org or 415-500-1181.

Join the Castro Ambassadors!
The Castro CBD is recruiting volunteer Castro Ambassadors to star this spring! Volunteer Ambassadors help tourists find their way; create a welcoming environment in the Castro; and direct visitors and tourists to places of interest. Hours are flexible and training and supplies are provided. Volunteer with a friend! See www.castrocbd.org or contact Andrea Aiello at execdirector@castrocbd.org; 415-500-1181.

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Castro/Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association January-February 2012 Page 7

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY AT EVNA.ORG/JOIN
MEMBERSHIP IS VALID ANNUALLY APRIL 15 TO APRIL 14
RENEW NOW AND AVOID THE E-MAIL REMINDERS!
GETTING INVOLVED

President’s Column

JANUARY 25 MEMBERSHIP MEETING - Join us at EVNA’s bimonthly meeting to meet our newly expanded Board of Directors, listed to the left. Additionally, hear presentations from local business owner Larry Metzger on his proposal to add a Parklet on Castro and from Evan J. Wynns, Executive Director of the SF Energy Cooperative on Green Energy efforts in San Francisco.

Additionally hear updates on the status of the following projects:

376 CASTRO - As we have discussed at membership on several occasions, there is a large project proposed for the current RC gas station at Castro and Market. EVNA is leading a coalition to ensure that this project meets community needs, with assistance of our District 8 Supervisor, Scott Wiener and his staff.

2299 MARKET STREET, AKA “CHURCH PIT” - The project sponsor has informed us that they are shovel ready and that work on this long vacant lot has already commenced. EVNA worked in partnership with other neighborhood groups to ensure a top-notch project with added community benefits.

CVS INTERESTED IN NOE CENTER - Learn the latest news about potential tenants for the long-vacant former Tower Records site.

CORBETT SLOPE - See front page story UPDATE: It’s now official! Both the Board of Supervisors and Mayor Lee have signed off on the Corbett Slope Community Garden. Congratulations Corbett Heights Neighbors!

TRIGGER - As reported over the past 3 years in the Eureka! and at Membership Meetings, Trigger has consistently violated their Conditions of Use, resulting in a $50,000 fine for nuisance violations. Unfortunately residents’ right to the peaceful enjoyment of their homes continues to be violated by this establishment. We’ll update membership on efforts to put an end to the nuisance. The war on residents’ right to quiet can no longer be tolerated.

SQUAT & Gobble - Squat & Gobbles Parklet permit is up for renewal in February. We’ll discuss EVNA’s position on this particular Parklet.

CHURCH STREET MUNI ESCALATOR PROJECT - Improvements to the North Side of Market escalators is being done with expected completion in March.

Other agenda items to be discussed:

Jane Warner and Harvey Milk Plaza Legislation
Parklet on Castro St btwn 18th & 19th Streets

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