

HAIGHT ASHBURY BEAT

Serving Lower & Upper Haight, Cole Valley and Panhandle

An Independent Neighborhood Newspaper

October 2005, Vol. 2 No. 10

Hiya, HAIA: neighborhood resident/merchant group revived

By Cheryl Brodie

Over the past few years there has been a growing awareness among some active community members of the merit of a vibrant joint merchant and resident organization in the upper Haight. While there are several neighborhood associations and merchant associations, none are acting as both merchant and neighbor organizations. Therefore, a group of active residents has revived the Haight Ashbury Improvement Association (HAIA), which originally formed as a joint merchant and resident neighborhood organization around the turn of the 20th century.

Some say HAIA was established in 1901; others say right after the 1906 earthquake. An HAIA ledger dates back to 1922. In 1949, 1950 and 1951 the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce awarded the association for their Christmas decorations. In 1950 HAIA officially incorporated. Although HAIA continued some activities into the 1990s, that decade seems to have signaled the end of a relatively dormant period for HAIA.

Past members of HAIA canvassed the community this summer to gauge interest in reviving a merchant/resident group. A steering committee of twelve formed, including past HAIA presidents and members, two 2004 candidates for District 5 supervisor and two SF commissioners. The steering committee is currently in the process of reorganizing, reviewing bylaws and preparing for a board election.

Boundaries of HAIA are roughly Fulton on the north, Divisadero on the east, 17th Street on the south and Arguello on the west.

HAIA will be publishing a newsletter this month. A holiday party for members will be held at a past HAIA Chair's home on December 14. Election of HAIA officers and board members will take place on January 18.

HAIA members look forward to working in concert with the many other neighborhood and merchant associations in the Upper Haight - as well as throughout the district and city.

Please email haia_sf@yahoo.com or call 221-5567 for more information.