

Milk, Lucas named to California Hall of Fame

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SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Slain gay rights activist Harvey Milk, "Star Wars" creator George Lucas and feisty football commentator John Madden will be among the newest inductees to the California Hall of Fame.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and First Lady Maria Shriver unveiled the list of 2009 inductees on Tuesday. They said the latest 13 "embody California's innovative spirit and have made their mark on history."

The others are entertainer Carol Burnett, former Intel chief executive Andrew Grove, former Gov. Hiram Johnson, decathlete and philanthropist Rafer Johnson, industrialist Henry J. Kaiser, philanthropist and peace activist Joan Kroc, artist Fritz Scholder, author Danielle Steel, bodybuilder and Schwarzenegger mentor Joe Weider and Air Force pilot Chuck Yeager.

Schwarzenegger last year vetoed a bill that would designate a day each year to honor Milk, the first openly gay man elected to public office in California. He was assassinated in 1978.

A nearly identical bill by Sen. Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, has passed the Senate and is expected to be taken up in the Assembly in the next few weeks. It would designate Milk's birthday, May 22, as a "day of special significance," but not an official holiday.

"This honor, as well as the Presidential Medal of Freedom awarded to Harvey by President Obama, should only underscore to the governor the need for Harvey Milk Day in California," Leno said in a statement Tuesday.

Francisco Castillo, a spokesman for the governor, said Schwarzenegger would not take a position on Leno's bill before it reaches his desk.

The nominees will be inducted in a Dec. 1 ceremony at the California Museum in Sacramento. Shriver started the program to honor artists, sports figures and others who've helped shape the state.

On the Net:

- California Museum: <http://www.CaliforniaMuseum.org>

This article appeared in 224 media outlets nationwide, including the San Jose Mercury News, the Fresno Bee, the Atlanta Journal Constitution and the Idaho Statesmen.

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