



Fog Cutter

Your community newsletter
Vol. 10 No. 2 Summer, 2010

Centennial countdown ...

Remembering Daly City's past ... The Meussdorffer Mansion

... a magnificent historical home

IF THERE WAS A LIST of the all-time most spectacular homes in Daly City, the Meussdorffer residence would have to rank at the top. The stately mansion in Daly City's Crocker Tract was owned by John Charles Meussdorffer, a wealthy San Francisco hat maker. The Meussdorffer mansion slowly slid into disrepair and was virtually abandoned by the late 1950s.



The magnificent Meussdorffer mansion and grounds.

The ornate residence was built in the 1880s, predating Daly City by nearly thirty years. When Daly City incorporated in 1911, the Meussdorffer mansion was by far the most extravagant home in the new community. The 22-room house rose gracefully above well tended English gardens in the area north of Bellevue Avenue, south of Hanover

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Another successful collaboration ...

36-unit condominium project

Affordable housing for Daly City

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY broke ground on a 36-unit condominium development at 7555 Mission Street, one of the agency's largest affordable housing projects to date. The project marks the fourth successful collaboration between the City of Daly City and **Habitat for Humanity Greater San Francisco**, making home ownership a reality for 36 very low- to low-income Daly City families.

The development features 34 three-bedroom, two bath homes and two two-bedroom, two bath homes. All of the units in the three-story building are 1,100 square feet and include parking. **Habitat's** newest Daly City project is within walking distance of the Colma BART station and SamTrans bus stops, qualifying it as



Planned Habitat for Humanity 36-unit affordable housing project.

a transit oriented development. The project recently garnered the **Signature Award** from the **Grand Boulevard Initiative**, a regional agency charged with improving the performance, safety, and aesthetics of the El Camino Real/Mission Street corridor from Daly City to San Jose.

Architect Dan Ionescu designed the project to compliment the surrounding neighborhood, replacing a paved lot with a vibrant condominium community. The project includes many "green building" features and a landscaped common garden fronting Mission Street.

Construction is expected to take 18-months, beginning with the parking structure. **Habitat** will rely on skilled labor for the initial phase of the project, but volunteers will be used to complete the housing units. The new homeowners will be required to invest 500 hours of sweat equity into the construction of their new home.

Habitat for Humanity Greater San Francisco partners with local working families, community volunteers, and donors to build affordable ownership homes in Marin, San Francisco, and the Peninsula. Families in need of improved living conditions get a hand-up, not a hand-out, from **Habitat**. Homes are sold to partner families at no profit and are financed with an affordable, zero interest mortgage.

—continued ... see **Affordable Housing...** page 2

Volunteers working together for a better Daly City.

KaBOOM! ...

A rebuilt playground for Daly City at Westlake Park

WESTLAKE PARK and the Doelger Senior Center both underwent major renovations thanks to the generosity of scores of volunteers and a commitment from some good corporate neighbors. The children's play-ground at Westlake Park was completely redesigned and reconstructed as a **KaBOOM!** project. **KaBOOM!** is a non-profit organization focused on giving every child in America a great place to play within walking distance of their home. Volunteers from **4-H National Headquarters**, **UC Cooperative Extension/California 4-H**, and the **Daly City Partnership** joined **KaBOOM!** and the City of Daly City in constructing the state-of-the-art playground. Substantial in-kind materials and labor were also provided by **Webcor Builders**.



KaBOOM! and local groups and volunteers created this beautiful new playground.

The new playground at Westlake Park was designed by children to replace outdated equipment near the center of the recreation complex, immediately west of the tennis courts. In addition to

the new equipment, major improvements were made to the subsurface drainage system. In years past, even modest rainfall flooded the old playground, rendering it unusable for days at a time. Hundreds of enthusiastic children were on hand for the opening of the playground to welcome the newest addition to Westlake Park.

Not far from the Westlake Park playground, just across the parking lot, Daly City's Doelger Center was also the beneficiary of a major overhaul thanks to a project of **Rebuilding Together Peninsula**. In addition to many hardworking volunteers, **Webcor Builders** kindly donated material and labor – valued at more than

\$100,000 – to complete the improvements. **Rebuilding Together Peninsula** is a non-profit agency that coordinates volunteer partnerships to rehabilitate homes and community facilities.

Daly City's Westlake Park and the Doelger Center are both extraordinary examples of what can be accomplished with a well-organized group of volunteers. **KaBOOM!**, the City of Daly City, and the **DeLue Boys and Girls Club** are planning yet



The new Westlake Park ... a great place for kids.

another collaborative effort later this summer. The playground at Bayshore Heights Park is scheduled for improvements valued at more than \$110,000. The one-day volunteer construction project is scheduled for Saturday, July 31, 2010. The existing playground at Bayshore Heights Park was installed in the 1980s and will be demolished and replaced in an intensive one-day effort. If you are interested in volunteering, contact the **DeLue Boys and Girls Club** at **(650) 991-5757**.

Affordable Housing ... from page 1

In addition to providing home ownership opportunities for low- and very-low income families, **Habitat for Humanity Greater San Francisco** offers free Homebuyer Readiness workshops, including "Debt Reduction" on Wednesday, June 23, and "Money Management" on Wednesday, June 30. Both workshops will be held in the Gellert Park Clubhouse, 50 Wembley Drive, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. For more information about the Homebuyer Readiness Program, call **(415) 625-1012**.

FogCutter

The Fog Cutter is the community newsletter of the City of Daly City. Please address inquiries to:

Community Information Office

CITY OF DALY CITY

333-90th Street, Daly City, CA 94015

For information about Daly City activities and programs, please check our web site: www.dalycity.org

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Second Harvest Food Bank ...

DALY CITY teamed up with Second Harvest Food Bank to distribute free food to families in need. Eligible families must have at least one child under the age of 18. This summer there will be food distributions on the fourth Saturday of June, July, and August. Food boxes weigh approximately 35 lbs. and contain rice, beans, canned fruit & vegetables, macaroni & cheese dinners, cereal, tuna, peanut butter, and tomatoes.

Food Distribution Schedule

When: Sat., June 26, 9:00 - 11:00 am
 Sat., July 24, 9:00 - 11:00 am
 Sat., Aug. 28, 9:00 - 11:00 am

Where: City Hall, Main Parking Lot, 333 90th St.

Participants in the food distribution program must sign a form stating that they meet the established

... distribution of free food to families in need

criteria (see chart below) and they must provide the last four digits of their social security number or the last four digits of their child's social security number.

The Food for Families program is funded by a Federal stimulus grant. Participants, or a member of participant's family, must be U.S. Citizens or Legal Permanent Residents for at least 5 years. For more information about the Food for Families program, please call **(650) 991-8007**.

Stimulus Food Assistance Program Eligibility Criteria

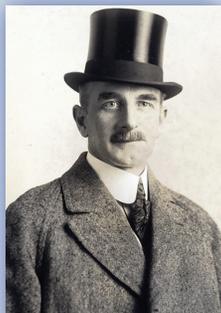
No. of Family Members	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Monthly Income Limit	\$2,428	\$3,052	\$3,675	\$4,298	\$4,922	\$5,545	\$6,168	\$6,975
<i>for each additional family member, add \$625</i>								

The Meussdorffer Mansion ... from page 1

Street, between Lowell and Whittier Streets. From 1863 to the late 1950s, the block-square property had belonged to Meussdorffer and his heirs. The San Francisco businessman had personally directed the construction of the house and landscaping of the surrounding grounds. A well on the property provided water to the home and supplied irrigation to his meticulously kept gardens and fountains.

Born in Germany and trained in hat making in France, Meussdorffer had become a California pioneer in 1849. At age 26, he tried his luck briefly in the gold fields, made and sold hats for gold miners, and then returned to San Francisco to establish a hat factory and a home. He is credited with inventing a collapsible opera "tiles" hat for refined California socialites. His expertise won him acclaim for manufacturing the finest hats in the state. Additionally, he bought and sold real estate. Before the great 1906 earthquake and fire, he owned many parcels of land, including the property now occupied by San Francisco City Hall.

Mr. and Mrs. Meussdorffer, their nine children, several servants, and frequent houseguests, occupied his "country house" at the San Mateo-San Francisco county line with style and elegance on a grand scale. Members of the San Francisco social set were



John Charles Meussdorffer.

welcome visitors, as were luminaries of the business, political, artistic and musical world of the 19th and 20th centuries. Concerts in the music room were frequent. Hospitality abounded. Invitees enjoyed splendid teas, sumptuous dinner parties, and gala receptions for visiting dignitaries.

A superb example of gingerbread trim and Victorian architecture, the mansion now remains only in memory and faded photographs. Meussdorffer died in 1894. His family continued to utilize his country home. In March of 1960, Miss Irene Meussdorffer, the last survivor of the family, vacated the sprawling building to live in a smaller home on Whittier Street. Two weeks later, a mysterious fire destroyed the mansion. The three-story gabled and garden home was reduced to ashes and charred remnants. Gawkers arrived as flames danced and smoke rose from the inferno. The cause of the fire was never determined.

The property on which the Meussdorffer estate was located is now the site of George Washington Elementary School at 251 Whittier Street. The outline of Meussdorffer's well is still visible in the school's playground. For more photos of John Charles Meussdorffer's mansion, visit the Daly City History Museum, 6351 Mission Street. The museum is open from noon to 3:00 p.m. every Tuesday and the first and third Saturdays of each month.

*by Ken and Bunny Gillespie, Daly City Historians
 photos courtesy Daly City History Museum*

**Fog Cutter
City of Daly City
Community Information Office
333-90th Street
Daly City, CA 94015**

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CaliforniaFIRST financing program for ... Energy efficiency property improvements — property taxes used to assist property owners

DALY CITY is one of many cities in the state that will be participating in CaliforniaFIRST, a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) finance program. PACE programs allow property owners to finance the installation of eligible energy and water improvements on their home or business. The CaliforniaFIRST program was established by the California Statewide Communities Development Authority (California Communities), an association of all 58 California counties.



Solar panels can be a CaliforniaFIRST project.

Property owner participation in the program is completely voluntary, but may prove to be a useful financing mechanism for those looking to make energy efficient improvements to

their home or business. Participants repay the amount financed through their annual property taxes. Payment may be spread out over terms of up to 20 years, depending on the life expectancy of the improvements. If the property is sold, the repayment obligation transfers to the new property owner.

Energy efficiency, renewable energy, and water efficiency improvement projects that are permanently affixed to the property are eligible for CaliforniaFIRST financing. Specific eligible projects may include improvements such as air sealing, wall and roof insulation, energy efficient windows, tankless water heaters, photovoltaic (solar electricity), and low-flow toilets.

The CaliforniaFIRST pilot program is expected to launch statewide in the fall. For more information about CaliforniaFIRST, call the Daly City Department of Economic and Community Development at **(650) 991-8034**.

Daly City Community Calendar

City Council Meetings

City Hall – 7:00 p.m.
2nd and 4th Monday of each month

Planning Commission Meetings

City Hall – 7:00 p.m.
1st Tuesday of each month

Independence Day Celebration

Doelger Senior Center
Westlake Park – 101 Lake Merced Blvd.
Friday, July 2
10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Call **(650) 991-8012**

Free Electronics (e-waste) Recycling Event

No Appointment Necessary
City Hall Main Parking Lot – 333 90th St.
Saturday, July 10
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

36th Annual Daly City Police Athletic League Golf Tournament

Olympic Club – Lake Course
Monday, July 26
10:00 a.m. Check-in, 11:30 Shotgun Start
Call **(650) 991-8092** for information.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

By Appointment Only - Free
City Hall Main Parking Lot – 333 90th St.
Saturday, August 14
8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Appointments:
online: <http://events.smhealth.org/events>
or call **(650) 363-4718**

KaBOOM! Playground Build

Bayshore Heights Park –
450 Martin Street
Saturday, July 31
Volunteers needed
Call **(650) 991-5757** for information