

Renovating the Discovery Center

HIGH STREET NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS
BY ADELLE FOLEY

As you drive down High Street just below Brookdale Ave., on your right you'll see a cream-colored building with off-red trim shining in the sun. That's the Discovery Center, where kids get a hands-on introduction to science. The paint job, floor replacement and vegetation cleanup was coordinated by Rebuilding Together Oakland, which brought together about 40 neighbors and other volunteers on April 23 and 30 under team leaders Garner Takahashi Morris and Matt Morgan.

According to Rebuilding Together Oakland Executive Director Kym Luqman, the Discovery Center was one of 39 projects under way in Oakland during April. Rich Bolecek, founder and Director of the Discovery Center talked enthusiastically about the positive energy of the people from college age

up who gave up their Saturdays, and how happy he was with the new linoleum floors and the paint job.

Among the volunteers were Council Member Libby Schaaf and Council Aide Shereda Nosakhare and High Street Coalition founders Preston Turner, Cheryl Golden, and Krista Gulbransen. The work crew raved about the grilled chicken donated by Mi Pueblo grocery and the fixings from Island Market. Krista told me that she saw the kids who attend the Discovery Center wander in, curious about every step of the process. During lunch, they brought out chairs and instruments and improvised songs expressing their gratitude for making their center look better.

Later, they were eager to pitch in, taking garbage bags to the street and cleaning up trash, and by the end of the day they competed to see who could "help" the most and wheedle the most snacks from the lunch table. Krista concluded that



The Discovery Center renovation volunteers.

the youngsters "saw that if adults took the time to take pride in their center, then they could too."