

APRIL 19, 2009

SUNDAY

The meltdown, from one company's perspective

BUSINESS



Props for a painter



No offense

A's come up short in battle of bullpens

SPORTS

oaklandtribune.com

Volume 135, No. 58

Oakland Tribune



Serving Oakland for 135 years

501

\$1.50



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HAZY DEBATE: President Barack Obama's push for more environmentally friendly energy has collided with natural resources protections. Firms are trying to harness the desert's most abundant resource — sunshine — but are clashing with efforts to protect wildlife, such as the desert tortoise.

AN UNUSUAL TRAGEDY
IN TRACY: Law enforcement

Earth Day inspires students to enrich their environment

By Paul T. Rosynsky
STAFF WRITER

OAKLAND — Ayana Bohannon, a seventh-grader at Kipp Bridge Charter School, learned a key lesson about home improvement Saturday.

"You get paint all over your jeans," she said, smiling. "But I guess I'll have to learn to live with it."

The 13-year-old was one of more than 150 students, parents, teachers and neighbors who volunteered to give the West Oakland middle school a face-

lift during a citywide Earth Day celebration.

The Kipp Bridge Charter School revitalization was one of seven featured Earth Day projects in Oakland on Saturday morning, most of them focused on litter and landscaping. In total, Oakland sponsored 72 Earth Day events around the city.

Using more than \$2,000 in donated supplies, the volunteers at Kipp Bridge

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RAY CHAVEZ/STAFF

BRESHAWN CLARK, left, helps artist Kristi Holohan paint a mural at Kipp Bridge Charter School in Oakland during an Earth Day revitalization project on the campus.

BAY AREA NEWS GROUP

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Earth

FROM PAGE 1

attacked a drab-looking campus with fresh paint, new shrubs and a brightly colored mural depicting the school's tenets — achievement, respect, responsibility, teamwork, commitment.

"Our school site didn't reflect how great we are inside," Assistant Principal Michele Sutton, 28, said. "We want to be as proud of the outside as we are the inside."

That pride began to show Saturday afternoon as students sandpapered rusty poles in preparation for a coat of paint. Others spread mulch around a newly planted shrub.

The daylong project was organized by What Now America, a nonprofit organization that runs a Saturday school at Kipp for children. The group also joined with Oakland and several businesses that donated supplies.

The group chose the

Earth Day celebration for the sprucing up to teach students how actions locally can help globally.

It also doesn't hurt, organizers said, to show students that people care about their community and school.

"If it's filthy ... then it appears no one cares," said Milad Yazdanpanah, 30, executive director of What Now America. "We are really trying to impart on them at a young age that they are part of a larger community."

Students appeared to be taking the lessons to heart as they carefully painted walls and tended to flowers and bushes planted around the school grounds. And because they were doing all the work, students said they earned new respect for gardening and keeping things clean.

"It feels good to help. You know you are doing the right thing," said Toni McIntyre, 13. "We are putting a lot of hard work into this."

Besides, said 12-year-old Mesoli Feleke, "if we didn't do it, it would never get done."



RAY CHAVEZ/STAFF

DANIEL NORMAN, left, and Breshawn Clark, both 12, help paint a mural under the supervision of artist Kristi Holohan at Kipp Bridge Charter School in Oakland on Saturday. More than \$2,000 in supplies were donated for the project.