



Playground Comes Alive

By **Carole Meekins**. CREATED Sep 26, 2011

MILWAUKEE - Children's laughter fills the air at a park near 29th and Melvina in Milwaukee.

Henrietta Cloyd, a longtime resident, observes, "Children are enjoying the parks for a change. We've been beautifying parks again and the neighborhood seems quite a bit better, more positive."

Gracious neighbors and community groups weeded out the bad and made it a place to play again.

Diane De La Santos, Chairwoman of "Rock the Lakes" Community Action Projects notes, "Thirteen months ago this park wasn't as full of life and kids. It needed attention. We worked with the community and brought a lot of people together. Now kids are enjoying it, it's a beautiful place to be."

More than 100 volunteers worked to fix up the site. They even painted some 20 neighborhood homes. Ruth McClinton, a longtime resident, has high praise. She shares, "They came through and painted porches and picked up paper. That meant a lot to know we are not in it alone."

To make the park shine, several local agencies worked together. They included Rock the Lakes, Triangle Neighborhood Association, the Northwest Side Community Development Corporation, Safe and Sound, even the Department of Public Works.

Leonard Moye of the DPW explains, "In order for endeavors like this to be successful, it requires a collaboration of government, private entities, and citizens groups. The success of this project speaks for that." Gracelyn Wilson of the Northwest Side Community Development Corp says, "I think we can all make a difference. No matter what we have to stand united."

Joe Kubisiak of Safe and Sound agrees. "It's infrequent that we receive this type of resource and actually have funds, tools and materials to offer. That was really exciting!"

And now that signs of neglect are paved with pride, residents of all ages living near 29th and Melvina have reasons to rejoice.