

Local Organization To Celebrate KWANZA, African Christmas

By Nathan Freeman

It has been a long and sullen struggle. A struggle that has dwindled into mere clashes in urban pockets fought by those few who still hold fast to the idea that Kwanza is an African heritage. That Kwanza, like all the great African feasts, demands its descendants pay it an over due respect for the message it bears to a people still in struggle.

Kwanza is a traditional African ceremony. Kwanza mean First Fruits. Kwanza is giving thanks for the Harvest. And African people come together to rejoice in the gift of rejuvenation.

The East Winston Library will celebrate its eighth annual Kwanza fest and the public is welcome and encouraged to come. Kwanza will be celebrated on December 31, at 7:00 p.m. African Americans from all around the Winston-Salem area will bring cover dishes of traditional, soul and Southern African-American cuisine. You will be entertained by noted talent from your own community, each celebrating one of the seven principles of Kwanza. The seven principles will be and their message will be communicated through guest speakers, dance, song, music, poetry, story telling and scenes from plays.

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We acknowledge

Kwanza from December 26 through 31. Decorations are in red, black and green. Red is for the love and blood of African people. Black is for our beauty. Green is our fertility to prosper, seeding in our youth the will to continue to struggle and grow.

The Seven Principles that represent the Seven Houses of Kwanza that are the

substance of the ceremony are:

UMOJA (unity) To strive for and maintain unity in our family, community and nation.

KUJCHAQUALIA (self determination) To define, to move, to create and to speak for ourselves.

UJIMA (collective work and responsibility) To build and maintain our community; to share the profits amongst the community.

UJAMAA (co-operative economics) To build and maintain our community together; to be responsible to, and concerned for our community.

NIA (purpose) To make as the objective of our collective effort the building and developing of our community.

KUUMBA (creativity) To do as much as we can, in the best way we can to leave out community more beautiful and beneficial to our people.

IMANI (faith) the seventh principle - To believe with all our hearts, and minds in our people and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

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Tim Jackson, the Director of East Winston Library, reflects, "About eight years ago Duane Jackson (friend and colleague), Larry Little and Margaret Allen (formally with the library) and others got together and start an annual Kwanza celebration and from that time on it has mushroomed." Tim Jackson goes on to state that next year the library will be granted funds to have an extravaganza celebration capable of providing cultural entertainment, strategies for networking, and delicious and exotic food on a much larger scale. Therefore, he reiterates the need for the community to support this event. It has been the "mushrooming" support since 1980 that has earned East Winston Kwanza celebration access to the funds they deserve.

"Kwanza celebrates and establishes pride in the African-American Community," says Jackson. We celebrate other holidays and know little about our own.

By using the seven principles Kwanza houses that govern our lives as a guide for self reflection and re-dedication we prepare to do better the next year.

Mr. Jackson goes on to state that we look at Kwanza as a coming together of black people from all backgrounds, celebrating the sharing of the harvest that symbolizes the need for the community to invest in itself.

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