

THE CHRONICLE

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Triad Cultural Arts continues Kwanzaa tradition



Submitted photo provided by Triad Cultural Arts

The seven principles of Kwanzaa are celebrated from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1 each year.

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

Like the Jaycees Christmas Parade, the mayor's annual holiday concert series, or the Christmas tree lighting ceremony, the annual Kwanzaa celebration hosted by Triad Cultural Arts has become a holiday

tradition here in Winston-Salem.

Celebrated each year from Dec. 26 - Jan. 1, Kwanzaa, which means "first fruits of harvest" in the African language Kiswahili, is an African American celebration that focuses on the traditional African values of family, community responsibility, commerce, and self-improvement. Each day of Kwanzaa is represented by a principle or theme that serves as the focus for the celebration that day.

Every year for nearly a decade, Triad Cultural Arts, a nonprofit, community-based multi-disciplinary cultural arts organization, has partnered with various businesses and organizations to host a

different event each night of Kwanzaa. This year the celebration began at the Winston-Salem Urban League, where Dr. Shawn Ricks gave a presentation centered on Umoja or unity.

On day two, City Councilmember and representative for the East Ward Annette Scippio talked about Kujichagulia or self-determination at the Delta Fine Arts Center. Day three was headlined by the theme Ujima (collective work and responsibility) and Nadiyah Quander, who serves as project manager for the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts at UNC School of the Arts.

On Sunday, Dec. 29, the theme was Ujamaa

or Cooperative Economics. The keynote address was delivered by Gerry McCants, state chair of NAACP Economic Development. The next day a Kwanzaa luncheon was held at Union Baptist Church, where school board member Barbara Burke discussed Nia or purpose.

Local youth took center stage on Tuesday, Dec. 31, when the theme was Kuumba or creativity. The event, held at the Forsyth County Central Library, featured a Youth Arts Showcase and guest speakers Chef J'Avia and JCB, two sisters who own and operate their own businesses.

The Kwanzaa celebration wrapped up at the

annual Emancipation Service held at New Bethel Church, where Dr. Kendall Jones is the pastor. The theme of the day was Imani or faith.

Throughout the week several individuals were recognized for their contributions to uplift the community. Honorees were; the late Brother Hashim Saleh, Malishai Woodbury, Annette Scippio, Happy Hill Community Residents, Gloria Hairston, Twin City Chapter-A&T Alumni Association, Bishop Sir Walter Mack, the late Dr. Carlton Eversley, and several others.

Although the Kwanzaa celebration doesn't get the publicity of the Christmas parade or other holiday events in the city,

it's clear that it is a tradition here in the Twin City. While enjoying the festivities on Saturday, Dec. 28, Janet Lindsay, a longtime Winston-Salem resident, said she looks forward to the Kwanzaa celebration every year.

"I can't remember the last time I missed it. It really has become a tradition for me and my family," Lindsay said. "It's a great opportunity to come together and celebrate what it means to be black and it seems to get bigger and better every year."

For a complete list of speakers and those who were honored during the week-long Kwanzaa celebration, visit www.triadculturalarts.org and click on the "Kwanzaa" tab.

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