The and his culture.



KWANZAA. In Swahili it means first, taken from the phrase "matunda ya kwanza" which translates as first fruits. And the Afro-American festival of Kwanzaa is based on this traditional African harvest celebration. But more than a celebration of the gathering in of crops, Kwanzaa is a means of celebrating the unification of femily and community.

It was started in 1966 by Maulana Karenga to promote a deeper respect amongst black men and women, individually as well as collectively. And also as a means of introducing and reinforcing nguzo

saba, the seven principles of Blackness.

The Kwanzaa festival is a week long celebration beginning December 26th and ending January 1st. It is non-religious, however. Each evening the family gathers around the dinner table to discuss and observe the nguzo saba principle set aside for that day. It all begins with the head of the household lighting a candle and placing it in the Kinara, or candleholder. The candles are black, red and green representing the colors of the flag of the Black nation. The seven principles are umoja (unity),

kujichagulia (self-determination), ujima (collective work and responsibility), ujamaa (cooperative economics), nia (purpose), kuumba (creativity), and imani (faith).

Kwanzaa. For the further development of a common value system and a sound and permanent sense of Black community.

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More information about Kwanzaa is available from the Kawaida Community Project.

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