

# The Englewood Call

Volume 1, Issue 2 Kwanzaa Holiday Edition

**Umoja**

To maintain unity in the family and community

**Kujichagulia**

Self-determination, to be responsible and speak for oneself

**Ujima**

Collective work and responsibility, to build and maintain a community

**Ujamaa**

Economic co-operation, to help and profit one another

**Nia**

Purpose, to build and develop the community for the benefit of the people

**Kuumba**

Creativity, to do everything possible to leave the community more beautiful

**Imani**

Faith, to believe in parents, teachers, and leaders

## Nia through health and wellness

SONYA MARIE HARPER

Many of our relatives are suffering and dying from diet-related diseases. We can't fulfill the true purpose of our lives if we are not around because we didn't take proper care of our bodies. One of the best ways to serve your community and family is to take better care of yourself and to pay more attention to your diet.

Our bodies and minds operate more efficiently when we eat fresh foods. We cannot raise healthy and prosperous families off of high-calorie processed foods, sugars, salt, fat and artificial ingredients. There are many steps that we can take to make sure our families are consuming healthy and high quality fruits and vegetables at a great value.

We have the power to demand better quality food, but we also have to buy more of the fresh fruits and vegetables to show grocers that we want a better selection of healthy and affordable foods.

Avoid having snacks and meals that you can pick up from the gas station, convenience store or liquor store. These are more likely to harm your body when they are not eaten in moderation. You can also develop an addiction to foods high in sugar, salt and fat.

Try to visit various supermarkets and farmer's markets to get the best variety of high quality produce at a great value. Stores such as Fairplay, Pete's Market and Rio Valley are known to have a good selection of fresh food with a high turnover rate.

Combat the lack of affordable healthy food by growing your own fruits and vegetables in your backyard, porch or community garden. You can even preserve and can your harvest to enjoy all year long. It's never too early to start planning.

Shop healthy through the winter! Faith In Place operates indoor winter farmer's markets throughout the SouthSide. For their schedule visit <http://faithinplace.org>.

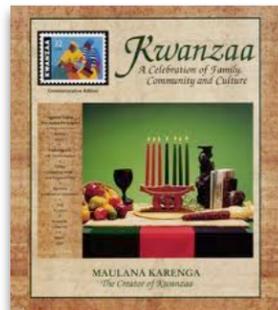
## Happy Kwanzaa!

In this special holiday edition, the creative team at *The Englewood Call* wanted to embody the principals of Kwanzaa. With the hustle and bustle of the holidays and the biting cold of winter, it is often difficult to stop and enjoy the holiday season.

The team wanted to remind the community of the true meaning of Christmas, acknowledge the ties that bond us as a community, and reflect on the past year. After all of our meetings and brainstorming, we soon realized that we were reinventing the wheel! That is precisely the purpose of Kwanzaa.

Kwanzaa was created by Maulana Karenga, professor of Africana Studies in 1966. Kwanzaa is derived from Swahili, meaning "first fruits," and is a week-long celebration after Christmas and before the New Year. Dr. Karenga states that Kwanzaa was created to celebrate the history and heritage of the Black community in the spirit of the seven principles, celebrated on each day. Although critiques bash the holiday as being a "fake" tradition, Kwanzaa continues to be celebrated by millions of African Americans and has spread across the world.

We hope that this edition of *The Call* will remind us all of the true meanings of this holiday season.

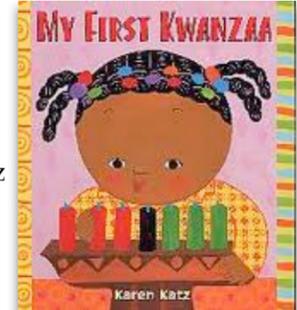


### Books on Kwanzaa

*Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture*, by Dr. Maulana Karenga

*My First Kwanzaa*, by Karen Katz

Both books are available at your local Chicago Public Library



## The spirit of Umoja in Englewood

ASIAHA BUTLER

As we acknowledge the seven principles of Kwanzaa, *The Call* is proud to report how the principle *Umoja* (unity) is being practiced amongst Englewood residents who have been impacted by the Norfolk Southern land grab.

Norfolk Southern (NS) has been purchasing homes in Englewood around the boundaries of Garfield Boulevard to 61<sup>st</sup>, and from Stewart to Wallace for the past 3 years in order to build a 84 acre freight yard. Homeowners report that the billion dollar company has threatened to use eminent domain as a scare tactic to get people to sell their homes, often for much less than what they are worth.

Norfolk Southern's plans and activities were not disclosed to the community until September 2011, when

Alderman Pat Dowell (3rd) and Alderman Willie Cochran (20th) demanded that NS formally announce their plans to the community.

Norfolk Southern's aggressive tactics to grab this land for cheap is a slap in the face to the residents of Englewood. While so many are fighting to save this community, outsiders are taking advantage of the neighborhood. However, the residents of Englewood are not backing down and have banned together in the spirit of *Umoja* to assure they are not disrespected and taken advantage of by Norfolk's abuses.

"*Umoja* speaks to the need to develop and sustain a sense of oneness, righteous and rightful togetherness and it urges us to practice a principled and peaceful togetherness rooted in mutual respect; justice; care and concern; security of person; and

equitably shared goods," states the founder of Kwanzaa, Dr. Karenga. The residents of Englewood have exemplified all facets of this principle while dealing with Norfolk and have been unified for over a year. The residents formed an official alliance, named the *Englewood Railway Coalition* and are continuing to work towards justice for all the residents in this impacted area.

With the leadership of a Steven Rogers, a former Englewood resident and prominent professor at Harvard School of Business, the coalition is making great strides. The unity and mutual respect this coalition has for one another in order to seek justice speaks volumes of how others in and outside of Englewood can practice *Umoja*, not only in celebration of Kwanzaa but all year around.

## Ujamaa. How you can attain wealth.

IBI COLE

I'll never forget my Aunt's voice one dawning of Christmas a few years ago. She was crying over the news that her roof had a leak and she would need to come up with a couple of hundred dollars for the repair. This kind of news seemed to be popping up in various spurts throughout the year; devastating her more and more each time. The skylight was leaking. The car needed a new something or other. The basement flooded a few months ago.

My Aunt is the type of person who prides herself very severely on appearance. However, over the past few years her home upgrades and upkeeps began to dwindle. "And now they are saying it will need something called a patch and repair..."

There was a long pause and then a heave of sobbing, "What am I doing wrong!?" She wailed through a tired exhale. She had no parachute, no "emergency funds." She was, like most Americans, one or two paychecks away from utter deprivation and living in fear.

As I drive through Englewood, I see this look on the faces of many. Waiting for the bus, standing in line at Currency Exchanges or at the grocery store. There is a fear deep within the stare that seems to say *How much longer can I keep this going?*



I wanted so badly to help my Aunt that day. I have, several times, given her advice or suggested books that can help with her financial woes. She often blew them off. She didn't have time to address her problem because she was too busy being neck-deep in it.

Although I was prepared to answer her question, I didn't think she was prepared to receive it. My Aunt not only suffered from bad shopping habits, but she also suffered from a highly inaccurate state of mind – which she was solidly set in. That state of mind is what many people share: The only way to survive in this world is to try to get a decent education, work for money and then try to save up enough money to retire. Rarely do people seek the missing link between the "just in the distance" level of financial comfort (The American Dream) and their current state of "barely making it."



What I propose is so simple, yet requires a tremendous shift in our way of thinking. Most people nod their heads vacantly like they hear words but do not really register them. Then they continue on their previous path as if I was a fly buzzing in their ear that was successfully swatted away.

Yet, when I heeded this advice just seven years ago, I was able to build a substantial amount of wealth in a short amount of time and I can see myself steadily walking toward that financial freedom. I am no longer in the maze. I am walking out. Here's what I wish my Aunt would have understood that day:

"Here's what you are doing wrong. You are only working for your money. You work for money and then you spend yourself into debt." That's it.

Telling people these days to stop buying things they can't afford is like telling a mouse to not eat cheese. Yet, that is one of the hefty powers behind the poverty cycle. Understanding the difference between what to buy and what not to buy is the other.

My Aunt has a master closet full of clothes. Most of which she doesn't wear. These clothes often age rapidly or fade in the wash. Some she can fit, some she cannot fit any longer. Some are mummified in plastic wrap. Some are hung like closet jewelry for viewing pleasure only. These clothes at times help my Aunt maintain an "appearance" of "having it all together." These clothes keep her from having the one thing she's always wanted: financial freedom.

Clothes are what wealthy people like to call "liabilities." This is a fancy term for items that go down in value as time moves on. Many people are obsessed with buying liabilities: Cars, clothes, junk jewelry, shoes and toys. They often buy these things on lay-away or with credit cards and build debt which must be repaid with their hard labor. People who become wealthy spend very little of their working earnings on "liabilities."

So this holiday season as the world of liabilities calls out to you to buy-buy-buy, ask yourself *What am I really buying here? How long will this purchase serve me? Will this purchase give back to me?* Take a look around your home and see what items you have purchased that stand the test of time. If these items are not giving back to you, they are liabilities and will only drag you further away from financial freedom.

Do yourself a favor this Christmas. Make gifts from things you find in nature. This costs nothing but your time and energy. (And if they don't appreciate your effort, then maybe you need to re-evaluate that relationship, too!)



Then take all the money you *would* have spent on Christmas liabilities and put them into something that will generate more wealth for you. Do this over and over and you will be well on your way to financial freedom. THAT is the gift that keeps on giving.

*The Vigil For True Justice is a bi-annual movement dedicated to guiding spending away from the cycle of poverty as it relates to the prison industrial complex and moving support to investing in community growth and wealth. Find out more at: [www.VigilForTrueJustice.org](http://www.VigilForTrueJustice.org).*

## Join the festivities! Kwanzaa celebrations near you!

The Lighting of the Kinara at the DuSable Museum of African American History  
Wed., December 26<sup>th</sup> - Sun., December 30<sup>th</sup>  
740 E. 56<sup>th</sup> Place, (773)947-0600  
Time: Varies Cost: Free

Chicago State University Annual Kwanzaa Celebration  
Fri., December 29<sup>th</sup>  
Jacoby Dickens Center, 9501 S. King Drive  
For more information, please call (773) 995-2000

Tell us how you celebrate or practice the principals of *Kwanzaa* this holiday season! Join the discussion on Facebook: **RAGE - Resident Association of Greater Englewood**



## Englewood News & Resources

### Planning for a Green and Healthy Englewood

The City of Chicago has been taking recommendations from residents in an effort to create plans and policies that will guide decision-making and investments for years to come. The plan is in its final stages of development and some projects are already being implemented. To find out about proposed changes to your neighborhood or to make comments on any plans go to [www.cmap.illinois.gov/chicago-ghn](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/chicago-ghn).

### Growing New Community Leaders

The Illinois Violence Prevention Authority (IVPA) is helping to groom a new generation of leaders from Englewood. Growing Citizen Leaders is a new program that will educate and encourage 13 to 20 year olds to take active roles in fixing some of the issues they face in the community. Some of their duties include promoting existing opportunities and resources, experiencing exciting field trips, communicating thru social media, and joining with

other youth programs in the city to gain more public support for their work. The program is open to all teens who live or attend school in Greater Englewood, and it can fulfill community service requirements. For more information or to apply to the program contact : Imagine Englewood If at (773) 488-6704.

### Free Financial and Career Planning

Trying to get your finances back on track and need some professional help ? The Center for Working Families, located on the campus of Kennedy-King College offers employment, financial and income support services. No matter your income the center can help you increase your earnings, reduce your financial costs and build wealth for you and your family. The center offers evening orientations and classes. For more information call (773) 487-3723.