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### CLASSES ENHANCE KWANZAA CELEBRATION

*Michael Barber, Herald Staff Writer*

Red, green and black are the colors of Kwanzaa. Red represents past struggles, green represents future hope and black represents the unity of black people.

Kwanzaa, a seven-day festival of family heritage and culture celebrated by an estimated 20 million people across the world, begins today.

In Manatee County, nightly family workshops devoted to teaching people about Kwanzaa will be held starting tonight at 6 p.m. at the Boys and Girls Club in Bradenton. In addition to the workshops, a full-day community celebration will be held Saturday at the C.D. Lazier Park.

"In my three years of celebrating Kwanzaa in Manatee County, I've found so many people who don't know what it's really all about or who don't have any idea of how to celebrate Kwanzaa in their homes," said **Cynthia Newell**, who will be helping to lead the workshops. "The purpose of the workshops is to teach people how to celebrate the holiday so they can celebrate it in their homes in the future as well as at community events."

Struggles for freedom during the Civil Rights era inspired the creation of Kwanzaa in 1966. Seven guiding principles --- unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith --- are stressed during Kwanzaa. Each night, a different principle is stressed.

"Each night during the workshops, one of the principles will be celebrated just like you would celebrate it at home," **Newell** said. "We'll have food and rituals and we'll explain what it all means. Tonight, the first night, we'll decorate the Kwanzaa tree."

**Newell** said Kwanzaa tradition calls for all decorations to be hand made. The holiday is not about buying things, it's about participation.

**Newell** also wants anyone in Manatee County to know they are welcome at the workshops. "Although it started as an African-American holiday, it's now celebrated throughout the world," **Newell** said. "Because the principles empower any ethnic group, it's open to everyone."

#### HERALD FILE PHOTO

**Cynthia Newell** speaks Dec. 28, 2001 to people gathered in a Kwanzaa Dialogue at the 13th Avenue Community Center to celebrate Kwanzaa.