Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

Martin Luther King, Jr. is known as a civil rights leader, whose fight for justice and equality spurred the civil rights movement. He delivered one of history's most memorable speeches, the “I Have a Dream” speech, from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial following the march on Washington in 1963. Now 48 years later, and just steps away from where he delivered that iconic speech, Dr. King is being honored with a memorial that is intended to be personally transformative for visitors, building a sense of commitment to the promise of positive change and active citizenship.

The August dedication event was postponed due to Hurricane Irene, allowing another opportunity to plan to attend. To learn more about the dedication ceremony now scheduled for Sunday, October 16, visit mlkmemorial.org.

Holiday Splendor

Holiday Splendor, OHA’s annual senior holiday celebration, is right around the corner. The popular event is a magical evening where over 100 seniors and disabled adults living in Public Housing and Section 8, dress up in their finest and enjoy dinner, a fashion show, prizes, live musical entertainment and dancing.

The holiday season, for many, is a festive time filled with parties, good food and family traditions that create lasting memories. We look forward to giving gifts and opening our homes and hearts to others as well as volunteering our time to causes that are dear to us. For some, however, the holidays can be a lonely time and financial pressures can also take some of the fun out of the season. For this special night you will be surrounded by friends and your OHA family as we share the joy of the holiday season.

If you live in OHA housing, plan to join in the fun, Thursday, December 15, from 5 pm - 8 pm at the Asian Cultural Center in the heart of Oakland. Contact Johanna Thaxter at (510) 587-5127 or Jillian Ryan at (510) 587-5110 for tickets. Seating is limited so call early and get your dancing shoes ready!

Story by Lillian Gibson
**Wintertime Celebrations**

Residents of the OHA community celebrate the holiday season in many ways. We are excited to learn about our neighbors and have more reasons to celebrate!

**Kwanzaa** is a celebration honoring African American heritage and culture. It is observed each year from December 26th to January 1st. The holiday celebrates the seven principles of Kwanzaa: unity, self-determination, collective work & responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith. Kwanzaa celebrations include lighting a candle-holder with seven candles called a kinara, playing music, artistic performances, libations, a feast and gift-giving.

**Hanukkah**, also known as the Festival of Lights, is an eight-day Jewish festival commemorating the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem during the Maccabean Revolt of the 2nd century BCE. Hanukkah starts on the 25th day of Kislev, according to the Hebrew calendar. Central to Hanukkah is the lighting of a Menorah which has nine candles, one candle for each night and another one used for lighting the candles. Festivities include singing Hanukkah songs, reciting prayer, eating traditional foods, playing the dreidel game, and giving Hanukkah gelt (money, usually in the form of coins).

The **Dongzhi Festival** is a Chinese winter solstice festival celebrated on or around December 22nd when the sunshine is weakest and the daylight is shortest. After the solstice, daylight hours will slowly increase, bringing in more positive energy. Families unite for the festival and eat traditional foods such as dumplings and tangyuan, balls of brightly colored glutinous rice that symbolize reunion.

**Christmas** is a holiday observed on December 25th to commemorate the birth of Jesus, the central figure of Christianity. Today the traditions of gift giving and other practices associated with Christmas are practiced by both Christians and non-Christians worldwide. Christmas celebrations might include family gatherings, a feast, attending church, caroling, gift-giving, symbolic decorations and displaying nativity scenes. Santa Claus, a modern day evolution of St. Nicolas, is the iconic figure of Christmas in the U.S. and is known around the world for being jolly and bringing gifts to children.

The **RAB and staff at OHA wish you and your family a happy holiday season!**

**Internet access**

If you have tried to find a job in the last two years you have probably learned first hand how difficult it can be if you do not have access to the Internet. Gone are the days when job-seekers can simply walk into a business and ask for a job and start the next day on just a handshake. Employers now expect you to upload, download, scan, attach, submit and e-mail your way into the job market. And to go a step further, school-aged kids are doing their homework and research online and grandparents are downloading those adorable photos of the grandkids using cloud computing technology. If all of this sounds like a foreign language, you are not alone.

Being connected is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity for an increasing amount of our day-to-day activities. Whether you are renewing your driver’s license or doing your holiday shopping, chances are you are doing it online. When you lack access to the Internet, also known as the digital divide, you are at a distinct disadvantage because you are competing and interacting with people who have access to news and information 24/7. When looking for a job, that disadvantage can translate into fewer job opportunities and no job offers.

OHA joined in partnership with the City of Oakland, Oakland OTX and 25 other community organizations in Get Connected Oakland!, a citywide effort to eliminate the digital divide. Through Get Connected Oakland! Public Housing residents and Section 8 participants are provided resources for Internet access, free computers and more. Families can also contact companies like Comcast for low-cost Internet service, with payments starting as low as $9.95.

So don’t delay and sign up today. Don’t miss out on all the great things the Internet has to offer!
Success Stories

OHA resident **Daaimah Waqia** has been very busy lately. After graduating from the OHA-sponsored Urban Fire and Neighborhood Leadership Institute (NLI) programs, she has fully devoted herself to launching her catering business, *Yes Ma’am Catering*, to rave reviews. With a mission to deliver healthy, delicious and affordable food options, Ms. Waqia has carved out a niche for herself in Oakland, catering several recent OHA events.

As a lifelong resident of Oakland, Ms. Waqia also feels strongly about maintaining her business’s community focus. Waqia has developed a training program around healthy eating on a budget and delivered the dynamic presentation to a group of OHA residents in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program. The audience was grateful to learn strategies to help keep their families healthy without breaking the bank.

It will be exciting to see *Yes Ma’am* continue to grow and to watch Ms. Waqia achieve new levels of success in the future. 

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**PARENT’S RESOURCES**

Parents, don’t panic! Balancing school work and downtime is now easier than you might think. Whether you are trying to get your kids back on track following 10 weeks of camps and summer fun or wanting to create a plan for how much television and video games is right for your family, you can make educated decisions with the information provided at commonsensemedia.org.

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**YOUR VOICE**

**The Write Stuff!**

The RAB is proud to learn that one of our neighbors, Meres-Sia Gabriel, is a published author! Meres-Sia recently published her first book titled, *I Twirl in the Smoke*. This collection traces one woman’s story from youth to motherhood, from pain and insecurity to self-confidence and self-actualization. *I Twirl in the Smoke* invites readers to take part in love’s radical transformation.

While we missed her July book signing and Q&A, it is not too late to show your support for this single mother of two girls from the OHA community. Check out *I Twirl in the Smoke* by Meres-Sia Gabriel at www.PalmOilPress.wordpress.com.

E-mail your comments or news to ohacommunications@oakha.org or drop off content at your management office.

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**RAB Blog**

**The Resident Advisory Board (RAB)** is actively engaged and inspired to improve our environment and communities. Thanks to the inaugural issue of OUR Voice, we have seen many new faces in our last two meetings, a trend we hope to see continue. Our recent efforts have focused on creating ways to improve the potential for residents to establish stronger support networks, quality schools and employment opportunities throughout Oakland. Agenda topics include increasing awareness of the political system and learning how it impacts our daily lives, improving our children’s likelihood of lifelong success through education, and strengthening OHA resident and staff interaction.

The RAB invites you to an upcoming meeting to learn what is happening that affects you. We meet the 1st Thursday of each month at 5:00 pm. If you would like to attend please contact Jillian Ryan at 510-587-5110. Get involved, meet OHA staff and your neighbors. Complimentary dinner is served and children are welcome.
Knowledge is Power

We all have memories of our school days: some of us recall our educational experiences fondly and some just couldn’t wait to be finished with school. Regardless of where you fall on the spectrum we probably all agree that school was beneficial and helped prepare us for life as an adult. Now, as parents, we have an obligation to guide our children through the educational process to graduation while preparing them for a world that is constantly changing.

While earlier generations had less exposure to technology, today’s students are immersed in computers, the Internet and other electronic devices as early as pre-school. It might be a different world than the one we grew up in, but fortunately, OUSD, OHA and community-based organizations are stepping forward to help children gain the skills they need in order to advance. Because public education is a right in the U.S., all students are entitled to information that will facilitate their immediate educational success and long-term professional prospects, if they take advantage of all that is available to them. Recognizing that accessing resources is sometimes challenging, the Education Program, offered by the Department of Family and Community Partnerships, helps families navigate the busy world of K-12 education and college prep.

Attend a RAB meeting to learn more about public education, curriculum, dropout prevention, the economic impact of a strong education, homework assistance and other topics of interest to parents, or visit the National Education Association at http://www.nea.org/home/30263.htm. For more local information visit www.ousd.k12.ca.us.

Story by Tina Moses

Halloween Safety Tips

- **Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.**
- **Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.**
- **Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.**
- **Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.**
- **Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you.**
- **Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent skin and eye irritation.**
- **Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks wherever possible.**
- **Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.**
- **Only walk on sidewalks or on the far edge of the road facing traffic.**
- **Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.**
- **Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats unless you know the cook well.**
- **Enter homes only if you’re with a trusted adult. Otherwise, stay outside.**
- **Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.**

For more information about child safety and Halloween festivities visit http://www.cdc.gov/family/halloween/
bipartisanship - Cooperation and collaboration between members of the two major political parties (Republicans and Democrats).

cabinet - Group of key presidential advisors which includes the Secretaries or heads of each department of the national government.

deficit - Amount by which spending exceeds available funds during a fiscal year.

deficit - Accumulated amount of unpaid budget deficits.

debt - Tax collected at the same rate or flat tax -

fiscal policy - Policies and programs establishing budgetary policy, including types and rates of taxation and types and amounts of spending.

flat tax - Tax collected at the same rate or percentage regardless of income level.

gross domestic product (GDP) - Monetary value of all economic activity (goods and services produced, etc.) in a nation during one calendar year.

judicial branch - Branch of government that hears and settles legal disputes.

legislative branch - Branch of government with the authority to make and change the laws of the land.

libertarianism - Philosophical perspective based on the premise that the legitimate sphere of government does not extend beyond the protection of individuals from harming one another.

lobby/lobbying - The practice of attempting to persuade members of Congress to support or oppose particular policies or pieces of legislation. This practice is called “lobbying” because such efforts are traditionally conducted in the “lobbies” or rooms and hallways just off the House and Senate chambers. Someone who engages in lobbying is called a lobbyist.

majority leader - Individual elected to lead a party in the House or Senate that holds the most seats in the body.

minority leader - Individual elected to lead a party in the House or Senate that does not hold the majority of seats in the body.

open primary - Election held for the purposes of choosing the nominee for a particular political party in which voters of any party are eligible to vote.

political action committee (PAC) - Arm of an interest group legally permitted to give money to political candidates competing for federal elective office.

pork-barrel - Spending that is primarily for the benefit of particular local interests in a member of Congress’ district and not obviously in the interests of the nation as a whole.
October
- 10/06/11 Resident Advisory Board Meeting
- 10/10/11 Columbus Day
- 10/29/11 Jack O’Lantern Jamboree
- 10/31/11 Halloween

November
- 11/03/11 Resident Advisory Board Meeting
- 11/08/11 Election Day
- 11/11/11 Veterans Day
- 11/24/11 Thanksgiving

December
- 12/20/11 Hanukkah begins
- 12/21/11 Dongzhi Festival
- 12/24/11 Christmas Day
- 12/26/11 Kwanzaa begins
- 12/31/11 New Year’s Eve

January
- 01/01/12 New Year’s Day
- 01/05/12 Resident Advisory Board Meeting
- 01/16/12 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

OCTOBER
10 20 30
29

NOVEMBER
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

DECEMBER
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SAVE THE DATE:
Saturday, Oct 29
10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Jack O’Lantern Jamboree
at Children’s Fairyland
Oakland, CA
www.fairyland.org/

Boo at the Zoo is from
10:00 am – 3:00 pm, with the costume parade at 11:00 am and 1:00 pm.
Admission prices are $8.50 for children and $12.50 adults. Parking is $7.00 per car.
Boo at the Zoo festivities are included with general admission.

Language translation services are available in 151 languages at all offices at no cost.
Los servicios de traducción en 151 idiomas están disponibles en todas las oficinas sin ningún costo.
Trường dịch thông dịch đầy đủ cho tới 151 tiếng nói miễn phí cho quý vị đang có tay
nhäu vàng phòng gần đây.
所有辦公地點都會免費提供 151 種
的外語翻譯服務。