



Ile Omode's

In pursuit of the whole African

RHYTHM

An African-centered educational institution; serving preschool-6th since 1986
January/February 6246 (2006)

VOL 6, NO 1

JAN/FEB EVENTS

- Jan 28 (SAT) @ 9:00 am**
- School beautification day! Last chance to complete monthly required service hours.
- Feb 1 (WED) Tuition due**
- Feb 4 (SAT) @ 10:00 am FREE**
- West African dance class for adults; at the school
- Feb 9 (THUR) 5:30 - 6:30 pm**
- IMABO Meeting (Mama Jasiri hosts) - FREE
- Feb 11 (SAT) 10-4 pm**
- 7th Annual HIV/AIDS in African Conference at Faith United Church (430 49th St, Oakland); sponsored by 4A's
- Feb 14 (TUE) @ 9:00 am**
- Picture day; see details at the school
- Feb 20 (MON) School Closed**
- Feb 26 (SUN) @ 10:00 am FREE**
- Dr. Karenga to speak at Wo'se
- Mar 5 (SUN) @ 2:00 pm FREE**
- Ancestor's Day Celebration at Ile Omode

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Looking for emergency kits? See redalert-industries.com
- UC Berkeley is offering its Academic Talent Development Program for parents interested in an enrichment summer program (K-6); applications for the program are due in March; see atdp.berkeley.edu for more info
- We recently completed a DVD showcasing our school; call the school for a FREE copy

BIRTHDAYS

JANUARY	FEBRUARY
Malaysia 1/12 (5)	Fatthiyya 2/01 (3)
Jaylah 1/15 (12)	Bakare 2/17 (9)
Coleman 1/21 (5)	Asaad 2/28 (8)

Ile Omode
 8924 Holly Street, Oakland
 (510) 632-8230 <http://www.ileomode.org>

Friends of Ile Omode Campaign Kick Off!

Become a friend and receive a gift basket



Our Friends of Ile Omode campaign will kick off a new campaign this month. Our fundraising goal is **\$25,000**. Reaching our goal is impossible without your help, so encourage your friends to become "our" friends. Friends are only required to make a single financial contribution each year. Contributions can be as little as \$50, although special gifts are available for contributions of \$100, \$500, and \$1000.

Anyone donating \$100 to the school during the month of February will receive a "Black History Month Basket". The baskets will be available from the school's web site for the entire month. Interested persons will be able to select the baskets online, and in the first weeks of February, school staff, parents, and friends will launch an email campaign encouraging friends, family, and colleagues, to contribute to this worthy cause. Baskets will also be available for pickup directly at our school, located in East Oakland.

We're offering three themed baskets: (1) "Knowledge is Power", with an emphasis towards literature and speech, (2) "Float Like a Butterfly", a sports-themed basket, and (3) "I'm Exhaling", providing products for body and mind pampering. Along with items unique to each theme, the baskets will contain a host of other items - including soaps, restaurant certificates, music CDs, an Ile Omode screen saver, t-shirts from local artists, and much more.

People are encouraged to forward email to friends and family to encourage them to visit the site. Our goal is to secure 100 friends during the first month.

Dr. Karenga to Speak at Wo'se



Kwanzaa creator to visit Oakland in February

Wo'se Community Church has invited Dr. Maulana Karenga, the creator of Kwanzaa and founder of the US organization, to speak on Sunday, February 26. He will speak during the church service, which begins at 10 am (adult and children's classes begin at 9:00 am). Dr. Karenga will speak on "Maat", a Kemetite (ancient Egyptian) term meaning "truth," *see pg 3*

Words of Wisdom

"...a Negro teacher instructing Negro children is in many respects a white teacher thus engaged, for the program in each case is about the same."

-Dr. Carter G. Woodson



Director's Corner

Baba Jahi Awakoaiye

One day I was taking my turn at feeding the family. My wife and I are one of those liberated couples that share in household tasks - which essentially means that we're equally intent upon washing the clothes - tomorrow. After completing dinner, I called for the children to come to dinner. After a delay that was apparently too long to my liking, I called out using my "this-is-the-last-notice" voice. Two of the three came scabbling to the table, but the third, and oldest, remained a no-show. I called a few more times, loud enough for the neighbors to dial "9-1-"; anticipating the scream that would necessitate the final "1"; still no response.

Of course now I'm in seek-and-destroy mode. When I find him he's sitting in front of the computer. He turns before actually seeing me, apparently hearing the electrons crackling around me. I'm barely able to maintain my composure long enough to get out, "Didn't you hear me calling you!" To which he responds with utter innocence in his face, "I didn't hear you Baba".

Several weeks later I'm sitting at the computer with no distractions, and finely focused. That is until I feel the air crackling, and turn to see my wife with eyes so tight she looks like Cyclops from the X-Men. "Are you eating or not", her deathly eyes locking me in a frozen trance. It becomes apparent that she's been calling me for a while, and, on this point I'm reasonably certain, I haven't been responding.

When our first child was born, my wife and I didn't know who he looked

like. This was OK, since we knew he belonged to us (one of the benefits of a monogamous relationship). It wasn't until later that I realized the physical similarities, while making for great family portraits, is far less significant than the similarities of behavior, nuance, and spirit. There certainly aren't too many things cooler than helping your daughter with homework and realizing, "hey, those are my hands she's writing with!", but when your child behaves like you, it is an education of self that can't be duplicated; to literally see yourself raw, and miniaturized.

Our children are certainly not clones of us, but they most certainly reflect particular aspects of our character. It's a marvel in divine intelligence. The person best suited to teach a child, is the person most like the child. This

"The lessons we impart to our children, are...the...lessons that we must learn."

is why we believe the parent is the first teacher. However, this only works well if the parent is sufficiently self-reflective to see themselves and their own imperfections. Otherwise we have parents chastising children for behavior for which the parent is equally guilty. Parents are saved from being absolute hypocrites, only because they've had years to mask their imperfections. Where a parent takes pride in having multiple interest, they accuse their child of lacking focus. The parent who is perceived as being outspoken and articulate, berates the child for being disrespectful and bossy. When in fact these are mirror images, differing only by the passage of time and maturity - and not always by maturity, because where you may see yourself as having multiple interests, everyone else just thinks you're flaky.

Before chastising a child for being prisoners of their own DNA, ask yourself How much of their behavior is reflected in you? Before berating a child for being loud, pose the question to yourself. Why are you so loud? Or disorganized, or forgetful, or confrontational, or scared

to assume leadership? Or why do you lie so much? Our children are as much our teachers, as we are theirs. If we're truly open to the transformation that greatness requires of each of us, then we'll better understand that the lessons are bidirectional. The lessons we impart to our children, are many times the very lessons that we must learn.

This applies equally to frustrated parents of adult children. They're perplexed as to why their child does not heed their pearls of wisdom - not realizing that aging does not impart wisdom; wisdom comes from self-awareness and transformation. Unfortunately the absence of self-reflection does not allow older parents to realize that someone gave them the same advice that they didn't heed either. So the lesson is not to transfer advice that they didn't respond to, but to better understand why they didn't, and to be open and honest with their adult child - so the child doesn't just receive the advice, but the life lesson.

Through my oldest I came to realize that he may need a "walk up" notice, not because he is being disrespectful, but because he zones in on activities that engage him; whether on the computer or building legos - in the same way his baba does. While I try to "zone" out less, not so much to avoid family dinners (although this is important), but because I also tend to lose sight of greater priorities.

Nevertheless, we still have the responsibility to correct our children's behavior. The child does not get a free pass from cleaning their room, because we suddenly realize that our life is in as much disarray as our children's room. But before offering the correction, do a personal inventory. How can you correct your own similar behavior? And use this knowledge to help yourself and your child, so that in 20 years they won't have to address the same lessons as adults.

"...in pursuit of the whole African".

Friends of Ile Omode

A Special Asante

Our Friends of Ile Omode campaign kicks off a new campaign this month, with a fundraising goal of \$25,000.

When running a non-profit organization, every single dollar helps, and rest assured we stretch every dollar to its fullest. We raised nearly \$12,000 last year, and thank everyone who helped.

We want to recognize some individuals whose donations exceeded our wildest expectations in 2005. Tyrone Thornton, a member of Wo'se, contributed \$300. Carl and Aladrian Mack donated \$250, as did Aduni Lockett and Pivotal Point. Mama Aduni is a Wo'se member, and Pivotal Point is a non-profit run by two Ile Omode parents. Pivotal Point wasn't the only organizations which contributed to the school. We were asked to attend an event hosted by the 4A's, and they stunned us with a check for \$1,000!

Mehib and Okanona Holmes offered \$500. Mama Okanona is one of our school's founders. The Bossetts, Dr. Charles and Patrice, donated \$1,250 last year. Dr. Bossett, along with Sia Awakoaiye of CalPremiere, were our first business sponsors. CalPremiere donated \$2,500, as well as countless donations throughout the year.

Mama Kimberly, one of our parents who also serves as our school's administrator dropped in \$1,000, as did Mama Pamela Williams, director of SOT (Sisters

of Tomorrow). A special thanks to our biggest donor, Konata Khalfani, a lender representative with MIT, who donated \$2,000 last year, and kicked off this year's campaign (formally beginning on Dec 30) with another donation of \$3,000!

Thus far this year we've received \$1,500 from Dr. Charles Bossett, DDS (our first business sponsor this year), and Minister Mxolisi and his wife, Sis Mary of \$2,500. Minister Mxolisi however writes so many checks to the school, he leaves an extra checkbook at the school just to save time driving back home.

A LIST OF OUR 2005 FRIENDS

Rebecca Ann Dawson
Aduni Lockett
Aladrian and Carl Mack
Zerita Sharp
David Stewart
Dr. Charles and Patrice Bossett
Konata Khalfani
Mildred Rose
Aaron Jones
Malik Kafele
Carolyn Migliore
Kimberly Kyles
Wo'se Community Church
E.W. Wainwright, Jr.
Mehib and Okanona Holmes
Carrie Secret
Dorothy Mae and James Scott
Anglea and Willie Archie
Kofi Ampim
Zolita Bobo
Samuel Jones
Autumn Jones
Ray Davis
Lezell Williams
Tyrone Thornton
Greg Hodge
Anthony Jones
Fritz Rene
Gayle Raven
Pauline Haynes
Pivotal Point Youth Services

from pg 1

justice, and righteousness", and its application today.

Dr. Karenga co-hosted the first Annual Ancient Kemetic Studies Conference in 1984, which later became ASCAC (Association for the Study of Classical African Civilization). He is also the chairman of the Department of Black Studies at California State University, Long Beach, and has written extensively. Some of his books include: Selections from the Husia: Sacred Wisdom of Ancient Egypt, The Book of Coming Forth By Day, Odu Ifa, and Maat, The Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics.

Gumbo Night was an Enormous Success!

5th Annual Events Raises over \$4,000

Our 5th annual event raised the most money ever! The Gumbo Night Fundraiser, held in December, has generally grossed slightly under \$3,000, but this year we had our best event in the past five years. With a great contribution from parents, including Mama Tracey, Mama Tanya, and others our auction and raffle earned over \$600, and as usual the Stewart family (Mama Paula and Baba Ajamu) single handedly carried our event. Last year the Stewarts sold over \$500 in tickets, and this year they sold over \$700! The Stewart clan takes their gumbo eating seriously!

With this level of success, we're looking for an even larger raffle and auction next year, so be prepared for an even greater event. If we're fortunate, we'll put the dynamic sales duo of "Stewart and Stewart" on the road.

Get Moving in '06

Exercise is generally the most common new year's resolution. For those so inclined, there are a number of offerings in the community.



Baba Abubakar continues his weekly martial arts aerobics classes. The classes meet twice each week on Tuesday and Thursday, and run from 6 to 7 pm. The aerobics class includes strengthening, weight reduction, self-defense and fighting techniques, and is a great way to relieve stress. The cost is only \$5 per session, and Baba Abubakar's energy, set to some old and new school rhythms, is an incredible way to stay healthy.

Wo'se renews its free West African dance class, offered on the first Saturday of each month at Wo'se/Ile Omode at 10 am. The classes are taught by Mama Titilayo, who is an exceptional dance teacher and sister. Persons interested in drumming are also welcome to attend.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

Call (510) 632-8230



Dr. Carter G. Woodson Father of African American History

Dr. Woodson was a self-taught man, and also earned his Ph.D. at Harvard University in 1912. He was the second African to receive a doctorate from Harvard (Dr. W.E.B. DuBois received a doctorate in 1896).

In 1915, Carter Woodson started the Association for the study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH). He began the Association to help Black historians uncover the history of the Black man in Africa and in America.

He concluded, "if a race had no recorded history, its achievements would be forgotten and, in time, claimed by other groups." He found that many of the achievements by Blacks were overlooked, ignored and even suppressed by writers of history textbooks. It was his dream that the truth would be revealed about African American contributions to the discovery, pioneering, development, and continuance of America. His prime ambition was that "young Blacks would grow up with a firm knowledge of their ancestors."

With this in mind he created Negro

History Week in 1926. He chose February because he wanted the week to coincide with the birth of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, not, as its become common to say, because it was the shortest month in the year.

One of his most popular textbooks, The Negro In Our History, was widely used for years in high schools, colleges, and universities. He was the author of more than thirty books. Probably Woodson's best-known book is The Mis-Education of the Negro, originally published in 1933 and still relevant today (the title of Lauryn Hill's CD, "The Mis-Education of Lauryn Hill" was a tribute to Dr. Woodson's work).

Below, you'll find quotes from Dr. Woodson, which have retained their relevance decades later.

"When you control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his actions...He will find his 'proper place' and will stay in it. You do not need to send him to the back door. He will go without being told. In fact, if there is no back door, he will cut one for his special benefit. His education makes it necessary."

"In the study of language in school pupils were made to scoff at the Negro dialect as some peculiar possession of

the Negro which they should despise rather than directed to study the background of this language as a broken-down African tongue – in short to understand their own linguistic history, which is certainly more important for them than the study of French Phonetics of Historical Spanish Grammar." [Over 70 years later, the Oakland School District made a valiant effort to recognize Ebonics.]

*"These [Negro] teachers, however, are powerless...In a few cases Negroes have been chosen as members of public boards of education, and some have been appointed members of private boards, but these Negroes are always such a small minority that they do not figure in the final working out of the educational program. **The education of the Negroes, then, the most important thing in the uplift of the Negroes, is almost entirely in the hands of those who have enslaved them and now segregate them.**"*

"With 'miseducated Negroes' in control themselves, however, it is doubtful that the system would be very much different from what it is or that it would rapidly undergo change. The Negroes thus placed in charge would be the products of the same system and would show no more conception of the task at hand than do the whites who have educated them and shaped their minds as they would have them function."

Mama LaTronda and Baba Lamont, of Pivotal Point, are leading a 6-week entrepreneurship workshop during the afterschool for students in the 3rd-6th grade.



Under the Category of: What is this Girl Eating!

The two pictures you see below are exactly 13 months apart! Some of you may recognize Jaylah's mother, Mama Malika, from "Making the Band". The sister performs locally, and is also a model and actress. While mama's career has continued to grow, her daughter, a 6th grader, has been growing in fantastic leaps! This time next year we may need to recut the door openings.



Sennua (3rd) and **Ammar** (4th) examining an owl pellet in the science lab. The students reconstructed the skeleton of a rodent consumed by the owl.



Ile Omode Launches Pen-pal/Sister School Program



It has taken some time, but with the help of Baba Shakur and Mama Sieanyene Windross (Galanafai [K] and Kpazawala [Pre]) we're finally getting our pen-pal program underway.

The parents are board members and cofounders of Kpazawala Ballayan Foundation, which has endeavored, since 2002, to provide support for Liberian children and their families. The 25 year long war in Liberia left many families shattered, and children not only displaced, but many having been forced to participate in the war. Our children recently participated in a fundraiser for the foundation on January 14 at the Malonga Center.

Through their foundation we've made contact with several schools, and have begun corresponding with the Carole A. Miller Elementary School in Accra, Ghana. The school is located in one of the many refugee camps outside of Liberia to support Liberian families.

The students in Ngola Nzingha (3rd/4th) sent the first letters to Ghana recently, and are awaiting response. Each class will participate, including our preschool. Communication has been difficult since the school lacks regular access to a computer and an Internet connection, so we've communicated sparingly via email. However, they did send pictures recently, and everyone has been excited.

We want to continue to expand our children's worldview, and having "friends" in distant countries, provides so much more than a simple expansion of their geographical and social understanding, but their own sense of connectedness within the African diaspora.

We've developed a proposal to further develop the pen-pal program, and provide for staff and resources sharing in the future. More updates will follow, and we'll keep everyone posted.

See the website for more updates
<http://www.ileomode.org>

Book Review

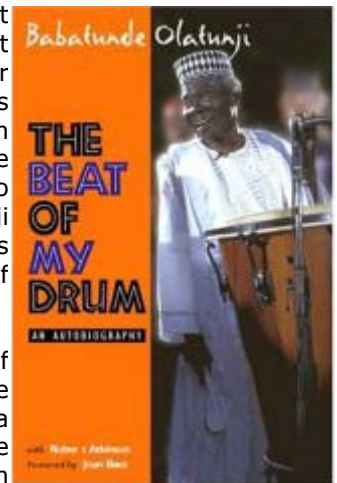
by Rodney Maxwell



Recently I have completed two excellent books. The autobiography of Babatunde Olatunji The Beat Of My Drum and a short fictional novel entitled Black No More by George Schuyler, a greatly under appreciated black intellectual.

Olatunji's autobiography should be read by EVERYONE. In a way, I consider it as important as Malcolm X's autobiography. Born in 1927 he gives some keen insights into the rich cultural heritage of West Africa and an important view of the United States from the early fifties until the 21st century.

He shows how a lot of West African culture is still a part of our everyday lives. For example, my father always cooked our Sunday dinner on Saturday night. After service on Sunday we'd return home to eat our "Gospel bird". Olatunji pointed out that my father's Saturday night ritual was of West Africa origin.



He points out the importance of drums in West African culture and their ability to have a profound effect on people. He discusses his relationship with John Coltrane, who provided financial support to his New York city based cultural center. Olatunji believed that Coltrane's music evolved in the latter part of his career with albums such "Ascension" and "Meditations", due to Coltrane's study of African and Indian music.



Black No More (originally published in 1931) is the work of a genius that I put in the same category as The Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison. The author, George Schuyler takes aim at EVERYONE from W.E.B. Dubois to Marcus Garvey in a novel that features a black doctor who invents a process for turning black people white.

7th Annual HIV/AIDS in African Conference

Sponsored by the

Association of Africans and African-Americans

"African Renaissance: The Rebirth of Our Youth"

Saturday, February 11 from 10-4 pm

Faith United Presbyterian Church, 430-49th Street, Oakland

Registration is FREE (includes lunch)

Call Aduni Luckett (510) 235-1455 for more info

Pan African Film Festival

Contact: PriorityAfrica@yahoo.com

Experience the vibrant voices and visions of recent and classic African cinema. Favorites of the international festival circuit offer compelling artistry and insight into Africa's changing cultural landscape.

FRI, FEB 10 @ 7:00 **The Hero** (*O herói*)

A wounded veteran of Angola's murderous 30-year civil war returns to civilian life in this nuanced story of a man, and a country, seeking reconstruction.

FRI, FEB 10 @ 9:15 **New Voices from Africa**

Four short films offer a provocative introduction to current African cinema: **African Middleweights** (Zimbabwe, 2004, 18 mins); **Something Else** (Nigeria, 2004, 16 mins);

Everybody's Problem (Guinea, 2004, 30 mins);

Safi (Burkina Faso, 2004, 30 mins)

FRI, FEB 17 @ 7:00 **Dôlé** (*Dollar, Money*)

A thoughtful young man moves from skipping class to robbery in this "400 Blows in Gabon" (California Newsreel), set in a hip-hop-ruled contemporary urban Africa.

FRI, FEB 17 @ 8:50 **Niwam**

A fisherman journeys from his small Senegalese village to the big city in search of aid for his dying child. Based on the novel by Ousmane Sembene.

PFA Theater: 2575 Bancroft Way at Bowditch, Berkeley, CA

Info: (510) 642-1124 Advance Tickets: (510) 642-5249

<http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/pfa>



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-Full music program

Theory, song, and instruments
(clarinets, piano, djembe, etc.)

-Daily lotion and meditation

A respect for ancestors, elders, and Divine

-African-centered curriculum

Not simply Black history, but a curriculum
which mirrors our soul

NOW enrolling - Preschool - 6th



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Not just a school, but a community

-California licensed preschool

Separate preschool and prekindergarten



-Integrated computer instruction at every grade

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<http://www.ileomode.org>