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Celebrate Diversity!

By Konnie Guo



Konnie Guo is currently a junior at Miramonte High School in Orinda. She is an avid reader, and during her spare time, enjoys playing the piano and doing volunteer work.

celebrating the holidays - be it Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanzaa - to remember one thing: while the traditions may vary, the spirit of the holidays remains the same.

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The Miramonte High School Diversity Club is working along with the leadership class to bring knowledge to students about the many holidays celebrated during the month of December in addition to Christmas, such as Hanukkah and Kwanzaa.

"It's important to be aware of other cultures and traditions, and not be narrow-minded," said Diversity Club officer Lina Mathkour, "especially since the United States is becoming more and more diverse each year."

Seventeen-year-old Rachel Breen celebrates Hanukkah and is proud of her Jewish heritage. "I'm glad to celebrate Hanukkah because it's a unique and fun holiday," she said. "It's a time to admire miracles and appreciate freedom." Hanukkah celebrates a victorious revolt that liberated the Jewish people in the second century BCE. Led by a man named Judas Maccabee, the Jews were able to successfully return to their Holy Temple in Jerusalem. As tradition states, the Menorah had to be lit to purify the temple, but there was only enough oil to last a day. Miraculously, the oil ended up sustaining the Menorah's flame for eight days and nights, which is honored today within Jewish households when lighting a new candle on the menorah each night. This year, Hanukkah coincided with Thanksgiving, a convergence that will not occur again for another 75,000 years.

Kwanzaa was established in 1966 to recognize African culture, and is a week-long celebration that focuses on seven core values: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. During the week, a kinara, or candleholder, with a total of seven candles is lit to represent these values. There are three red candles on the left, three green ones on the right, and one black candle in the center.

The Diversity Club is looking to spread more awareness to students by planning lunchtime activities during the month, and will be reminding everyone who is

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