



# The Pink Panther

## Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

25 South Hill Court, Oakland, California 94618 (510) 549-4900

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 15, 2008

Dear Kaiser Families,

It's the holiday season! But which holiday? Christmas begins on December 25 (it's 12 days, really!), the Islamic New Year, Muharram, is on December 29, and Hanukkah begins on December 20 and goes for 8 days. Then there's the Winter Solstice celebrated this year on December 21. I've gathered some thoughts from Google and would like to share them for your family discussions. (Apologies to practitioners of these faiths if I've made mistakes.)

**Muharram** is the first month of the Islamic calendar. Instead of a joyous celebration, Muslims mark the date with mourning gatherings. Fighting is prohibited during the month. Since the Islamic calendar is lunar, Muharram moves from year to year when compared with the Gregorian calendar. Here are some reflections about Muharram:

From Jamilla: A time to contemplate about the suffering that my ancestors went through to spread the true word of Allah. It helps me to realize how small any problem I have is compared to what they went through, to appreciate their efforts and to help me think about the way that I conduct my life and the improvements I can make to become a better person.

From Farah: A reinforcement of standing up for Justice at any cost. A time to reflect and identify whether I, myself am a Muslim who compromises knowing what Allah (SWT) has ordered.

From Abbas: Muharram means standing up against oppression and commemorating it means keeping the spirit of Imam Husayn (AS) still alive in his protest against a corrupt society.

**Hanukkah** is the Jewish Festival of Lights, commemorating the rededication of the temple after Roman occupation. The oil lamp was only fueled for 1 day, but miraculously lasted 8 days. Some thoughts on Hanukkah:

The darkness of the whole world cannot swallow the glowing of a candle. ~Robert Altinger

Still ours the dance, the feast, the glorious Psalm, the mystic lights of emblem, and the Word. ~Emma Lazarus, "The Feast of Lights"

On Hanukkah, the first dark night, light yourself a candle bright.  
Invite me in to dance, within that gentle light. ~Nicholas Gordon

Although most Biblical historians would say that Jesus was probably born in the spring, we celebrate **Christmas** on December 25. Somewhere in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century the 12-day Roman holiday of Saturnalia was redesignated as a celebration of Jesus' birth. Christians believe this is when God became a human, and so it's cause for celebration! Some thoughts on Christmas:

Christmas is the season for kindling the fire of hospitality in the hall, the genial flame of charity in the heart. --  
Washington Irving

# Getting In The Know

Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful. -- Norman Vincent Peale

Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone.--Charles Schulz

The **Winter Solstice** is a magical time of the year for those who celebrate it. Many religions have gravitated toward this date to hold major ceremonies, celebrations and sacred observations for we are intrinsically tied to the cycles of nature, of shortening days and changes in the moon.

Winter Solstice is the shortest day and the longest night of the year. As the hours of daylight grow, so too, we can let our inner light of understanding, love and intuitions grow. Allowing both the dark and the light to resonate within us, for it is part of us and we can practice new beginnings of unity, compassion, empathy and global love.

Winter Solstice rituals include candlelight, meditation, reflection and looking forward to a new dawn. Prepare some seasonal incense and an appropriate meditation for the magical night of dreams ahead. Decorate your home with the colors of winter; white to represent the winter snow, dark green winter foliage, red winter berries and fruits, gold to represent the returning energy of the sun and silver for the delicate frost that settles all around at this cold time of year.

So that's a little information about some of the major holidays going on this time of year. We live in a society with many different groups and it always helps to learn about other traditions. There are so many holidays to celebrate; I hope you have a wonderful time with yours! Enjoy your time with your children!

Mel Stenger, Principal

## KAISER CALENDAR

DATE / DAY	EVENT
Dec. 15	Middle School Info Night at Chabot Elementary, 7-9 p.m.
Dec. 16	Orff Music Concert, 6:30 p.m. (grades K-3)
Dec. 18	Instrumental Music Concert, 6:30 p.m. (grades 4-5)
Dec. 19	Last day before break
Dec. 22 – Jan. 2	Winter break
Jan. 5	Classes resume

**Our Winter Musical performances will be on Tuesday, December 16, for grades K-3, and Thursday, December 18, for grades 4-5 Instrumental music. Both programs are open to everyone and both begin at 6:30. Parking will be available on the upper field.**

### How to Reach Kaiser School

Our phone number is **(510) 549-4900**  
(includes a 24-hour message service).

To participate in the school community group,  
go to (and join) this website:

**[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kaiserelementaryschool\\_group/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kaiserelementaryschool_group/)**

### How to be in the *Pink Panther*

To include your story or information in your school newsletter: forward your news, questions, or article to **both** of the editors by **5 p.m. on Sundays** via e-mail:

**carriemail2001@yahoo.com – Carrie Shepherd**  
**jolie@earthlink.net – Jolie McRae**

Please put "Pink Panther" in the subject of your email to ensure that it is not deleted accidentally!

**The Pink Panther is also available at**  
**[www.KaiserElementary.org](http://www.KaiserElementary.org)**

### Pink Panther's PTA Sponsors

PTA President: Janice Murphy

### Pink Panther Staff

Co-editors: Jolie McRae & Carrie Shepherd  
Copy editor: Wendy Harcarik

# Kaiser Kiosk

## Middle School Information Night

12/15/08, from 7-9 p.m.  
in Chabot Elementary's Auditorium

Hear information about these schools:

- Bret Harte Middle School
- Claremont Middle School
- Edna Brewer Middle School
- Montera Middle School

## Kaiser Elementary 2009-2010 Open House and Kindergarten Informational Visits

There will be an information meeting for prospective kindergarten parents on Wednesday, January 7, at 6:00 p.m. Please tell any friends, relatives, or neighbors with incoming kindergartners about this meeting. Word of mouth is our best advertisement!

Kindergarten informational visits started on November 4. Continuing visits will be held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays with the earliest visits beginning at 9 a.m. and the latest visits at 11:30 a.m. To schedule a classroom visit, RSVP to Robin Sasada, administrative assistant, at 510.549.4900 or [robin.sasada@ousd.k12.ca.us](mailto:robin.sasada@ousd.k12.ca.us).

## Dec. 17: Special Committee Recommendations

The recommendations made by the Special Committee on School Admissions, Attendance and Boundaries WILL be read and heard at the BOE meeting next Wednesday, Dec. 17 (5pm, OUSD Board Room, Paul Robeson Building, 1025 2nd Avenue). This is the meeting where there will be opportunities for the public to voice their thoughts regarding the recommendations. If you plan to attend and would like to speak, be sure to fill out a "speaker card."

## Winter Performances News

It's time again for our annual 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>  
**GRADE WINTER FESTIVAL –**  
**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2008!**

Instrumental Music Students will start us off at 6:30 p.m. followed by Mr. Neat's 5<sup>th</sup> grade play. If there is a reason why your child cannot participate, please send a note to Mrs. McCarthy ahead of time. The performance will begin at 6:30 p.m., but all 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students must arrive at 6 p.m. for tuning. Please have your child wear concert attire: white top and dark bottoms. Also, please encourage your child to practice. We want to sound terrific for our Festival! Thanks for your support and see you there.

## Orff Props Needed

On Tuesday evening, December 16, the K-3 Orff music classes will present their winter program "**Our Pitter Patter, Splitter Splatter, Splish Splash, Drip Drop Rainy Evening: A Musical Downpour in 3 Acts.**"

Our teacher Mr. Walz needs umbrellas and wind chimes (metal, bamboo, etc.) for the performance. If you have any of these to loan, please label them and bring them to the school office.

Parents might appreciate knowing that there is an online link to school lunch menus on the OUSD website under 'Parents, Health & Wellness' at:  
<http://webportal.ousd.k12.ca.us/WebItem.aspx?WebItemID=138&TabID=145>. A great site to bookmark!