

The Magazine Section

Kinder Camp: A full day of fun

By AUDREY L. WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

There aren't too many children who would say no to a good old-fashioned water fight.

Claydell Shields, the Patterson Avenue YMCA's Kinder Camp director for the past five years, always says yes to the water-balloon fights the children have annually. It has become tradition.

"I look forward to the balloon bashes," says Shields. "It's something you can't do at home."

This year, Kinder Camp registered 72 children. Fourteen counselors assist Shields in the all-day task, which begins as early as 7 a.m. and ends when the last child is checked out by a parent or guardian at 6 p.m.

The camp, now in its fifth week, runs through Aug. 3 for children 3-7 years of age. A weekly fee of \$35 is charged to non-members and members pay \$25 per week. Camperships are available to the majority of parents, reducing costs from \$15 to \$20.

The children are taken on outings almost daily. They tour local parks, museums and historical sights to heighten their curiosity, says Shields.

Kinder Camp consists of a full day of activity for the youngsters and all of them participate in instructional swimming. Two certified lifeguards watch over the Patterson Y pool, which is located in the building's basement.

"A lot of parents have told me that when they pick up the kids take them home and feed them, they're asking to go to bed, says Shields.

"It's unbelievable," she says, "but you're wearing them out all day long."

Instead of dropping the kids off at the babysitters each day, Shields says she believes the children have the opportunity for educational and recreational enrichment through Kinder Camp, which also includes trips to the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro, the movies, trips to local fire stations, fast-food restaurants and factory tours.

Meals are sponsored by the city's free lunch program. The children are fed hot meals furnished by Atkins High School at 11:30 a.m. At 4:30 p.m., they each receive a snack to tide them over until their parents arrive.

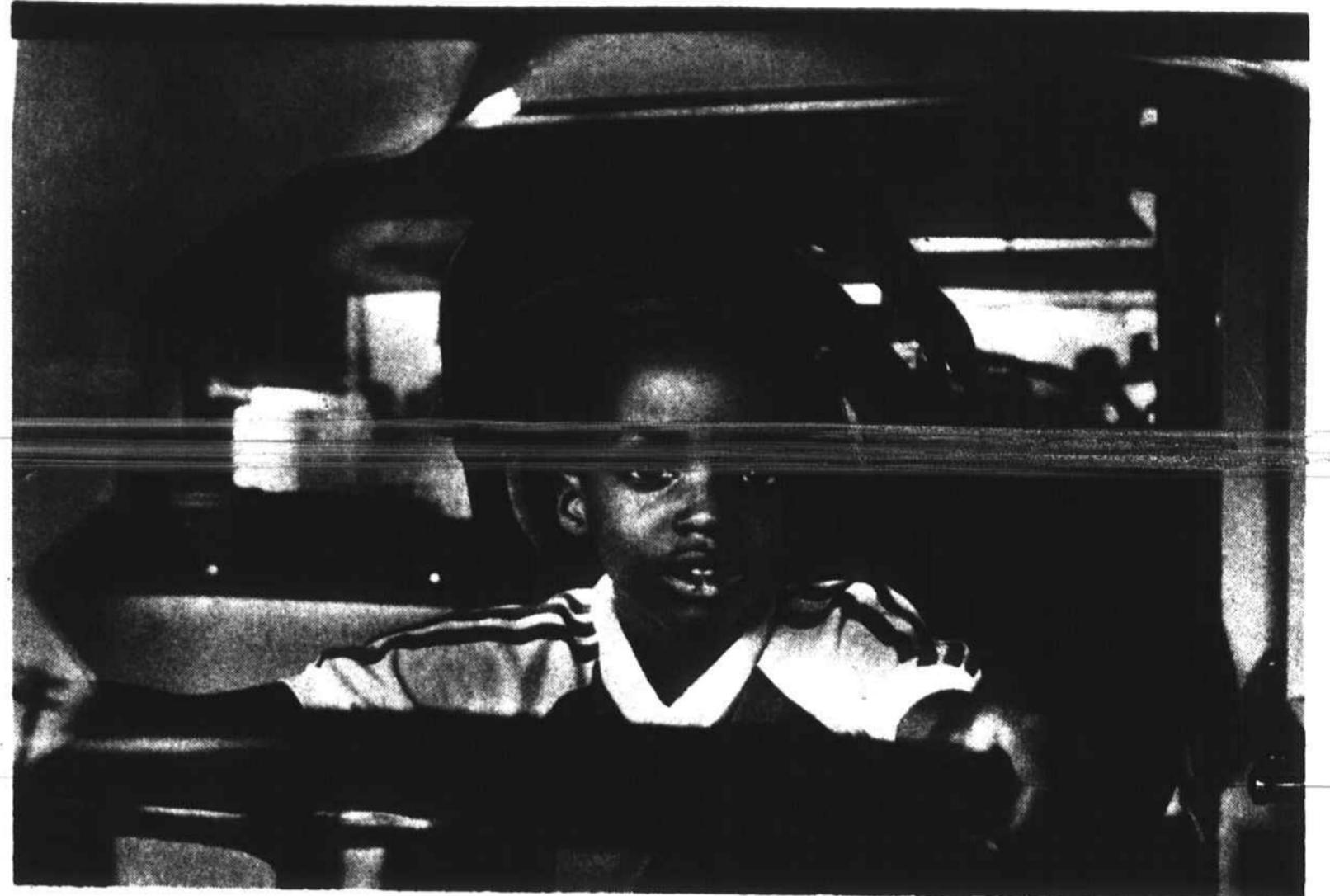
Though any large group of youngsters carries the potential for mishaps, Shields says she's happy to report that accidents have been scarce so far.

"That's the reason we have so many counselors," she says, "to avoid as many accidents as possible.

"I'm thankful that we've had only one accident this summer where I had to take a child to the hospital," she says.

For children whose parents don't have cars, two

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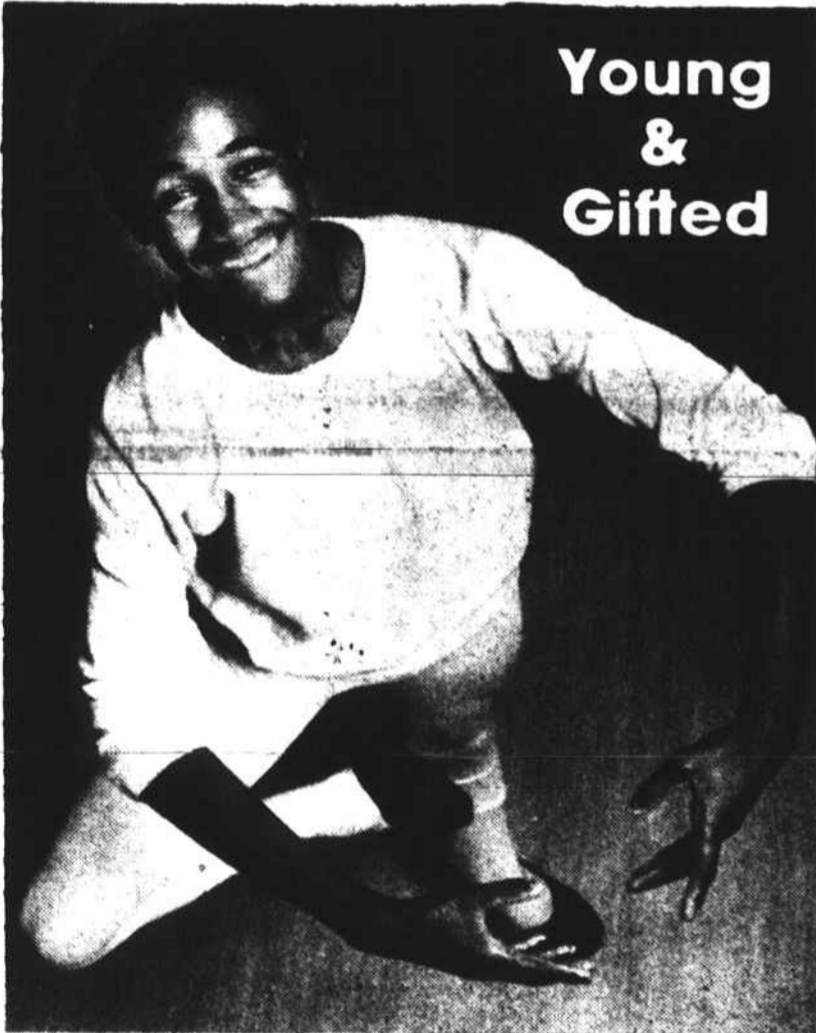


Revvng Up

Six-year-old Thomas Amos takes over the driver's seat during the Patterson Avenue YMCA's Kinder Camp's recent tour of the

Marshall Street Fire Station (photo by James Parker).

Brian Pitts: He'll defend his ballet even if it means a fist fight



Young
&
Gifted

Dedicated

Brian Pitts will defend his love for ballet even if it comes down to a brawl (photo by James Parker).

Newcomer

For Davis, Winston-Salem is the place to be

By AUDREY L. WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

When Greg Davis completed his undergraduate degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a whole new world opened up for him, he says, when he entered law school at the North Carolina Central University.

Adapting to the atmosphere of a predominantly black university and the appealing ratio of women to men had Davis thinking he could extend his three-year stay, he says.

But as fate would have it for the now-settled 34-year-old attorney with the law firm of Henderson & Summers, he moved to Winston-Salem at the end of April from his home in Sanford to start all over again.

He gave up his seven-and-a-half-year partnership at Davis & Wilson in order that his wife, Stephonia, a contract negotiator with Western Electric, could put an end to her daily 90-minute drive from Sanford to Greensboro. Now she commutes 45 minutes a day on a van with other company employees.

In Sanford, Davis was an outspoken member of the community. He holds the distinction of having been the first black elected official in Lee County, where he served on the board of education for three and a half years.

"I didn't resign until May," says Davis, "because I wanted to make sure the right person took my place."

Lee County is small. The town of Sanford has a population of 16,000, and the county has 35,000 people.

He says he enjoyed being among his peers and family while establishing himself as an attorney and a politician, but there wasn't much room left for advancement.

"Winston-Salem offers me the opportunity for professional growth," says Davis. "... I'm not normally a big city oriented person, but in some respects Winston-Salem is a big city, with a small town atmosphere, and it offers a lot more to do socially."

By AUDREY L. WILLIAMS
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Say mostly what you want to 14-year-old Brian Pitts, but try and put down ballet, and you're in for a fight.

"There have been times where I have gotten into fist fights," says Brian. "I was out to prove that anyone who danced ballet wasn't funny or that you didn't have to be a girl to be a ballet dancer."

Brian will enter the eighth grade at the North Carolina School of the Arts in the fall. This will be his second year at the school, after being recruited from Easton Elementary when he was a sixth-grader.

At first, he says, his stepfather, Wardell McClamb, was skeptical about ballet, but his mother, Marcella, was excited the first time his counselor called. During his sixth-grade year, Brian attended afternoon dance sessions with other youngsters who showed promise of becoming dancers.

"My father began to support me about midway through my first year," says Brian. "He wanted to see me play football and basketball."

For a second-year student, Brian has advanced beyond other students in his age group, but in a way, it's all to be expected. One of the reasons the School of the Arts recruited him was that he couldn't resist jumping to the ceiling in the hallways during class changes, and he proved in his physical education classes that he was more limber than most.

His narrow and slender frame can send him flying through the air with just a feather light trot and lift of his body.

"I don't know why I've caught on so fast," says Brian. "I guess I just like to dance."

"I really like ballet," he says. "It looks so beautiful, so acrobatic."

Placed above average academically, the 5-5, soft-spoken Winston native says it was an adjustment changing from a regular public school to a school exclusively for the arts.

"I didn't feel very comfortable when I first came

"I thought about going into other things, but God meant for me to be a dancer and that's what I'll be."

-- Brian Pitts

here," Brian says. "In (regular) public schools you don't have responsibilities placed on you. Here you're responsible. It's a big difference."

All Brian ever knew about ballet was what he had seen on television, he says. Other than the fact that he enjoyed watching it and that he liked to dance, he says, he had no idea what type of dance he would be involved in.

"At first all I knew was that I was going to be dancing," he says. "But, the more I studied, the more I began to understand and like ballet."

"I thought about going into other things," says

Brian, who would like to become a member of the North Carolina Dance Theater, "but God meant for me to be a dancer, and that's what I'll be."

Another reason he says his mother was eager for him to enter the School of the Arts was her constant fear of not knowing where he was after school.

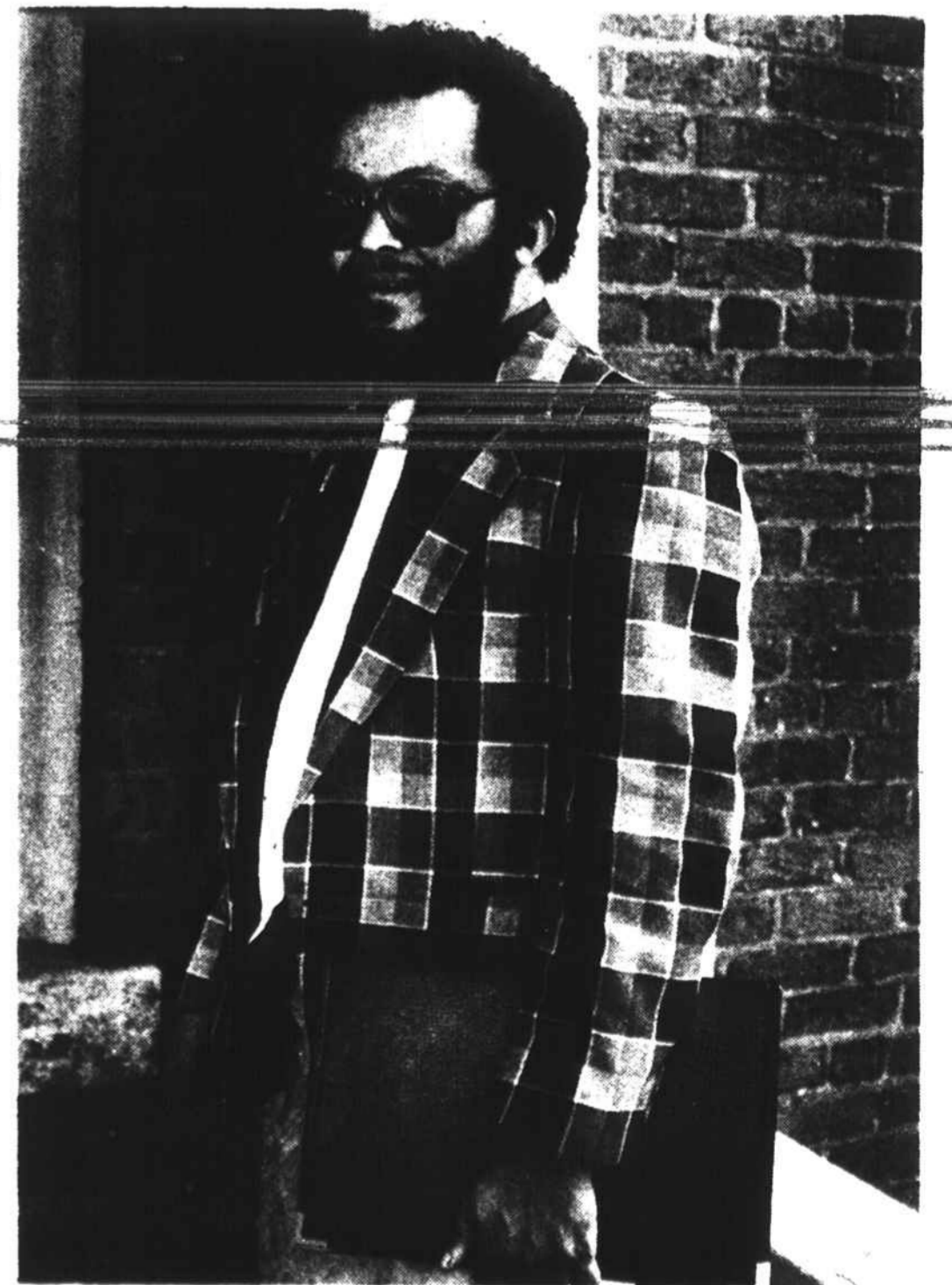
"I'm here from 8:30 (in the morning) to 6:30 in the evening," Brian says. "My mother feels that I'm safe here. She didn't feel very secure about public schools."

Dance is something Brian says he's always been fascinated with. It was the constant movement of it, he says, that attracted him initially. During the interview, his fingers are constantly tapping on the wrought iron table in the commons area in front of the student union. His finger nails are practically null. He bites them to ease his nervous tension, he says.

"I can't keep still. I have to use my energy," says Brian.

The world of classical dance is competitive and Brian realizes that fact but is ready for the challenge, he says.

"I'll make room for Brian Pitts," he says. "I just know that I'm going to be a professional dancer."



Settling Down

Attorney Greg Davis says one thing he likes about Winston-Salem's black community is that it's politically involved (photo by James Parker).

Basically, says Davis, he had no problems with leaving everything behind, but this is the last time he plans to pick up and move.

"Winston-Salem will be home, I think," he says. "We're getting pretty well settled on that and I'm getting too old."

A highly visible figure in the Sanford community, Davis was a member of the East Central Community Legal Services board of directors, the Sanford Golf Commission board of directors, and he volunteered his time with the local Heart Fund Association and United Way.

"This climate in Winston-Salem is right (for politics)," he says, "but I have to get settled before I jump in."

"I'm a very political person and I'm not saying I may run for office, but I will be involved," says Davis. "I can't help it; politics is in my blood."

And he says his only regret he had about leaving Sanford was leaving politics behind him -- at least for a while.

Like Sanford, Davis has also found that the world is not as big as it appears. Cecil Summers, a partner of Henderson & Summers, was a law clerk in Davis' office while a law student at Campbell University in Buies Creek.

"He's (Summers) been talking to me for the last two-and-a-half years about coming to Winston-Salem," says Davis. "It worked out perfectly. I got my wife off the road."

"I don't have any ego problems," he says. "My aim is to make money and serve my clients. If I can make money without my name out front, that's fine."

The world also got smaller when he realized that his former high school guidance counselor, Clarence McKee, who is now a city/county school administrator, had taken up residence in Winston-Salem. It was while Davis was watching the nightly news, he says, that he recognized Walter Marshall, vice president of the local NAACP, a former physical education teacher and track coach at his old high school.

"That's the one thing I like about Winston-Salem," says Davis. "The black community seems to be more involved politically."