

# COMMUNITY

## Newell Has Plan to Help Youth in School

By VERONICA CLEMONS  
Chronicle Staff Writer

Former Winston Salem Alderwoman Virginia Newell said there are several reasons why African-American children are not successful as they should be in the school system, but the foundation to correcting those problems begins with the family.

Because she thinks family time is so important, Newell wants to start a program that would dedicate about two hours a week for family time. She said she would like to start the program in a community where she knows many of the people, such as Happy Hill Gardens. In addition to spending quality time together, the purpose of family time will be to discuss important issues, such as behavior in various situations and settings, what to do when looking for a job and why it's important to go to the library. Newell said lifestyles have changed so much that families do not take the time to sit with one another and discuss important matters.

Behavior in school is definitely something that needs to be discussed at home, she said. Newell recalls growing up in a family where everyone sat down at the table for dinner, where a discussion of the day and school was discussed. Newell said mothers have an important role in governing their children on how to behave in a classroom setting.

"A lot of the times a mother is there but she doesn't realize she must corral those people around her," said Newell, the former Mathematics Department chairperson at Winston-Salem State University. "A mother or someone should talk about how we should act."

Newell, who in 1991 started the Math and Science Academy of Excellence — a program that works with middle-school students to improve their performance levels during the summer — said she is a strict disciplinarian. In her class she requires students to sit up straight, speak correctly and complete the work she assigns.

"Words like 'yep' are not acceptable in my class because that is not how I communicate," she said.

Children must also be taught at home to respect teachers, Newell said. But teachers must also present an authoritative role to be respected.

Newell and teachers for the Math and Science Academy, which is ending a session this week, held a parent/teacher conference to allow teachers to tell what has been going on in their classes and parents to make comments and ask questions.

Parents agreed that their children were learning a lot in the academy this summer and were enjoying being in the academic setting during summer vacation from regular school.

Mavis Lloyd, who has two daughters in the Academy, said she was appreciative of the enthusiasm her daughters have expressed in math since being involved in the program.

"To hear my daughters say, 'Mom, I like algebra' I could have paid the fee 10 times over," she said.

Newell said she insisted on parents coming to speak with the teachers because it's important for parents to know what their children are doing in school. Progress tests for Forsyth County schools show not even 50 percent of African-American children in the third, sixth and eighth grades are performing at levels in math and English sufficient enough for the next level. In those same grades, more than 70 percent of the white students are performing at necessary levels or higher when time to enter the next grade.

Newell added that part of helping children at home is making them complete homework assignments.

"Our students spend too much time on recreation and not enough time for serious matters they have to face daily," she said.

A lot of teaching can be done at home to reinforce what's being done

at school, Newell said. Also a parent can teach a young child many of the little things they will need as they get older. But because many parents are so young and sometimes do not have the necessary tools to help their children, Newell hopes to begin a parent workshop. She said the workshop will help parents guide their children through high school and then on to college. Educational professionals will talk to parents about how they can help their children at home and things they can learn at an early age, such as some basic math principles.

Not only parents should be committed to helping children, it should be a community effort, Newell said. She said she is grateful to Shiloh Baptist church and Bill Rice for driving the students to Reynolda House Museum of Art every day.

"We've got to take the education of our children in hand and let them know we care," she said.

## Coke wants Connection with Grass-Roots Community

By DAVID L. DILLARD  
Chronicle Staff Writer

Aquila Canty and Carlus Flowers wanted summer jobs that were exciting and meaningful to the community.

They found them through a summer internship with the Coca Cola Corporation's Community Connection program.

The two senior business students at Winston-Salem State University can be seen driving the company's community connection music van through black neighborhoods giving away Coke products to residents.

"I appreciate what they're doing for the black community and the entire community in Winston-Salem," Canty said. "They have shown a genuine interest in our youth."

Coca-Cola's Community Connection program started last October with a test market in Greensboro. Since June, the effort has spread throughout the Triad where the music van makes stops at recreation centers, housing com-

munities and other residential areas in the African-American community giving away drinks and other Coca-Cola products.

RoxAnne Jacot, Coca-Cola's area marketing director, said the interns were recruited to increase the company's presence in the African-American community.

"They understand what's happening in the communities first hand, so we ask them for feedback," she said. "From them we get a reality check to see if our data is correct."

Jacot said the van makes several unannounced stops at area recreation centers and gives out drinks, t-shirts and frisbees.

They have also enlisted the support of Greensboro radio station WQMG Power 97.

Pat Brannigan, Coca-Cola's regional vice president, noted that the company has sponsored many major events of black interest, such as the CIAA basketball tournament, but said the community connection effort is specialized to reach grass-roots blacks.

"We're trying to reach the



l-r Carlus Flowers, Aquila Canty, Rox Anne Jacot and Pat Brannigan pictured with Coca-Cola Community Connection Van

grass-roots African-American appreciation for African Americans.

"They are not doing programs just for advertising," he said. "It's not just to put (the name) Coke out there. They're sincere about giving back to the community."

The community connection van will be visiting different areas throughout the summer.



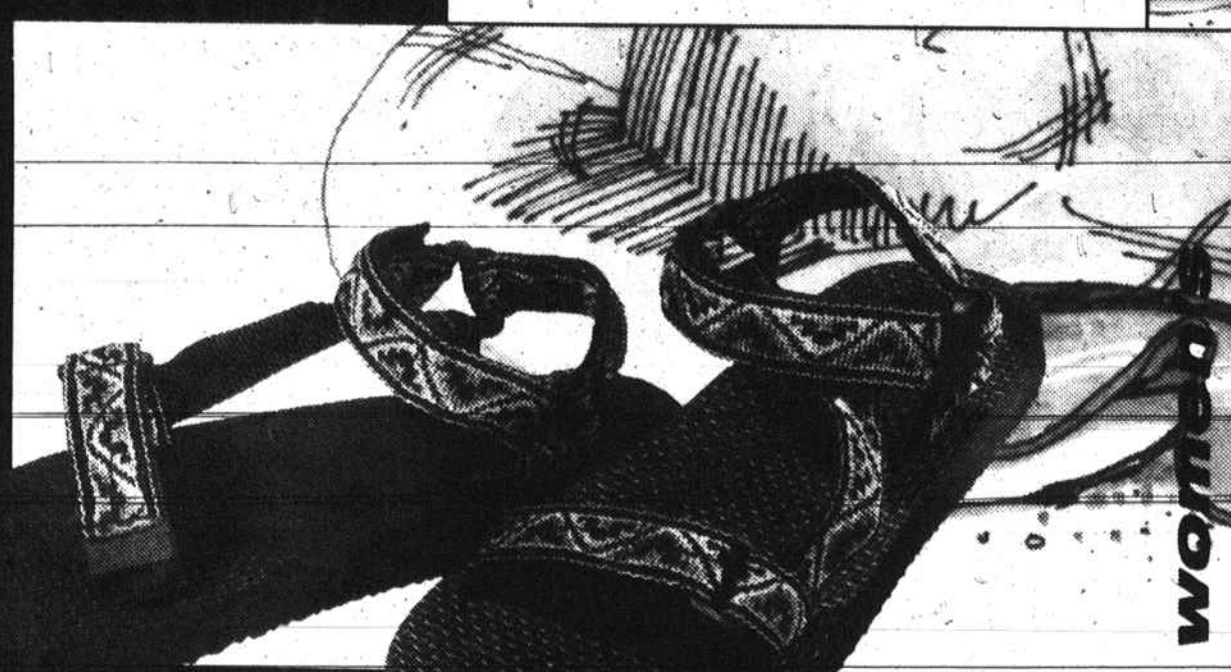
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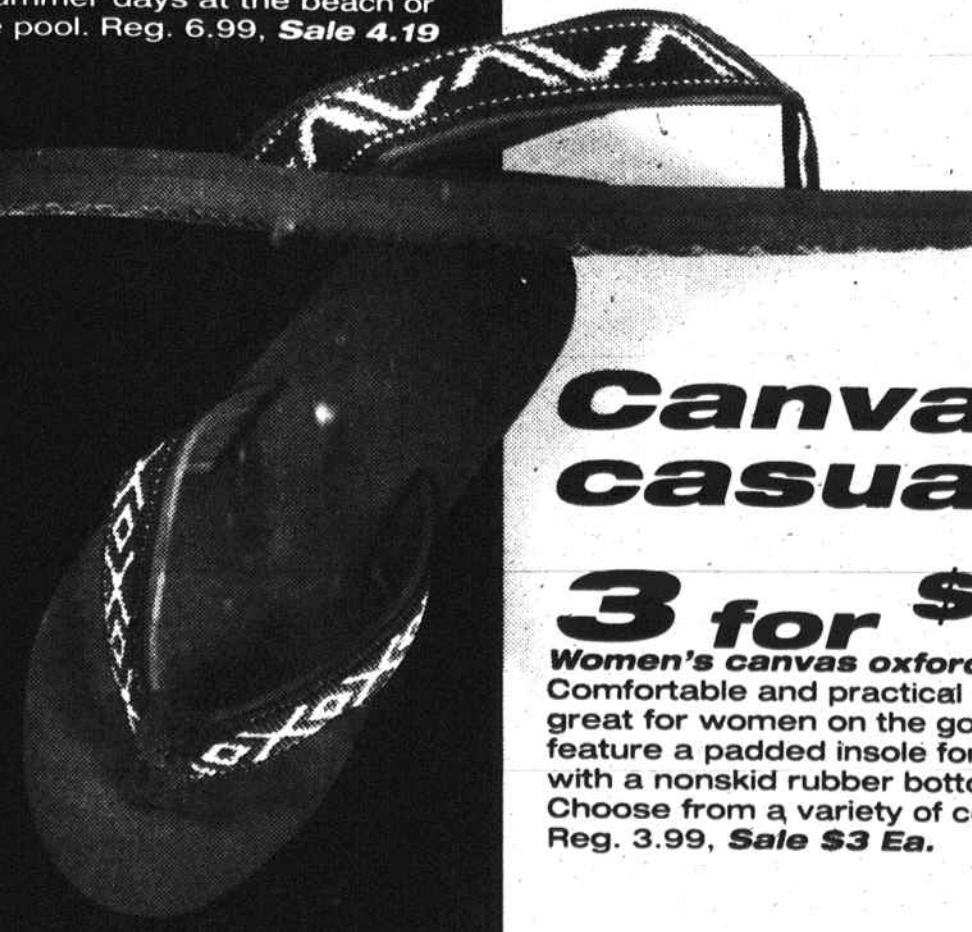
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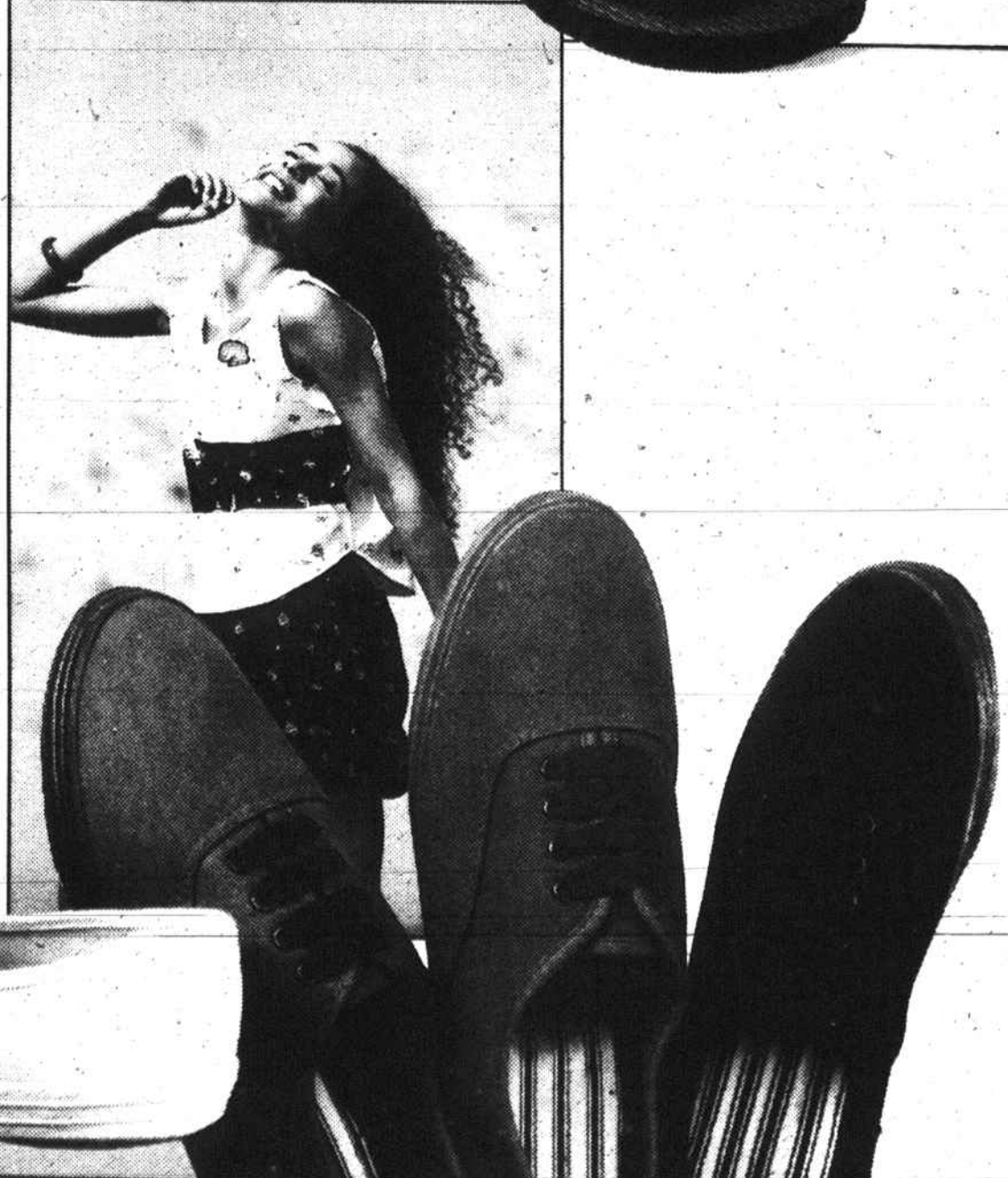
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