

C271 W7801

75 cents

AMERICA NEEDS JOURNALISTS

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER WEEK • OCTOBER 4-10, 2020



THE CHRONICLE

• See Opinion/Forum pages on A4 & 5 •

• See Sports on page B1 •

Volume 47, Number 5

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.

THURSDAY, October 8, 2020

Virginia Newell turns 103 'A vote-less people is a hopeless people'

BRIDGET ELAM
THE CHRONICLE

What do you talk about with a centurion? Most would think that history would top the list of conversation topics. But if you are talking to Virginia Newell, you are talking about the near future – November 3rd to be exact.

On Wednesday, Oct. 7, Virginia Newell turned 103 years old and she is showing no signs of taking her foot off the gas pedal.

In a phone interview with The Chronicle about her birthday, Ms. Newell spoke passionately about America's political climate and the need for everyone who can to get out and vote.

"I have about 200 families to call. I'm urging them to get out and vote on Nov. 3," said Newell, who also mentioned she was wearing a Biden-Harris t-shirt during our conversation. "We need a president who cares about the people. I've never lived in a time where the president makes fun of and mocks people the way he [Trump] does. I'm doing what I can to make sure he is not re-elected."

Ms. Newell is originally from Davie County and relocated to Winston-Salem at a young age. She was a graduate of Atkins High School in 1936 and in 1977 Newell (along with the late Mayor Tempore Vivian Burke) became one of the first two Black women elected to the board of alderman (now city council).

While representing the city's East Ward, New-



Photos from Newell family

Virginia Newell

ell championed for racial equality through fair housing, equal rights, and quality education for Black and brown children.

Newell was previously quoted in The Chronicle saying, "If I had started earlier, I think I would have made it to Washington. I wouldn't have been like Maxine Waters, but something like her. I would've been like a Harriet Tubman in Washington, a Sojourner Truth in Washington; they would've known I was there. I would've let them know what was happening to our people."

Newell hasn't lost her

zeal for politics.

"A vote-less people is a hopeless people." Newell said, quoting leaders of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.

She says the 2020 pandemic is like nothing she's ever experienced before.

"It's pretty bad. Economics is at its bottom because a lot of businesses have gone belly up and a lot of people have lost their jobs. I don't think I ever lived like it is at the moment. And I never lived with a president who is as erratic and so non-conforming and a person who doesn't think about any-

body but himself.

"I will be working hard to get people to vote as long as the Lord gives me strength, so that it can be more pleasant for people," she said.

It's ironic. Newell did not have the right to vote until she was 48.

When asked, what keeps one around for over 100 years, Newell's response was full of sound advice and simplicity.

"Buy pretty flowers, listen to good music, and have good friends," she said without hesitation. And of course, she mentioned some biblical vir-

tues as well. "Treat people like you want to be treated and love everybody."

Newell has been pleased with the phone calls, cards and flowers she's received in honor of her birthday and expresses her gratitude.

Because of the pandemic, Newell will not have a big celebration. She is not getting out, but she is still excited about having her children visit.

"I'm looking for my children to come but they can stay in a hotel," she laughed. "Everyone needs to stay safe and healthy during this time. We have

to wear masks and keep a safe distance.

"I think the Lord is keeping me here for a reason," Newell said answering the question as to why she thinks she is still here. "He may be keeping me here to help us get a new president. I hope He is doing that. I'd like to see a president who cares about us."

Please join The Chronicle in wishing Virginia Newell a very special and very happy 103rd birthday.

Her gift wish list consists of one item: GO VOTE!

CAN A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE PROTECT OLDER ADULTS FROM MEMORY LOSS?

JOIN THE U.S. POINTER STUDY

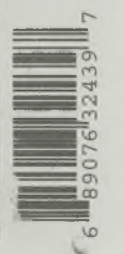
We are looking for eligible adults who:
• Are 60-79 years old
• Are not regular exercisers (generally less than 3 times per week)

For more information, contact us at:
833-361-7591 | pointerstudy@wakehealth.edu

U.S. POINTER alzheimer's association Wake Forest Baptist Health



www.wschronicle.com



WTTXS-E-RES & SERIALS MGMT
DAVIS LIBRARY CB # 3938
PO BOX 8890
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27515-8890 90