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Kenny Towns, a junior golfer at Lake Braddock, tees off during the Cougar Classic this past Monday, Aug. 10. Towns scuffled his way to an 80 at International Country Club.

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PHOTO BY JASON MACKAY/THE CONNECTION

GI Bill Puts College in Veterans' Reach

Obama appears at George Mason University to roll out new veterans benefits package.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE CONNECTION

Having grown up in the area, Jacobo Flores returned to Northern Virginia after serving four years of active duty in the U.S. Marine Corps.

While on active duty, he earned an associate's degree through a community college extension site at one of his military bases. Now Flores wants to get an undergraduate degree in civil engineering, so he enrolled at George Mason University in Fairfax.

The process of getting his college diploma has been slow going. Flores, already older than your typical college student, has not been able to take a full course load at Mason because he also has to work full time to support himself.

In recent years, service members and veterans have received some financial assistance if they decided to go back to school. But the extra help is usually not enough to cover the cost of both tuition and student living expenses. Like Flores, most end up working full time while taking classes.

"We are working to make ends meet," said Flores, who lives in Fairfax and has been working for a federal contractor during the day.

BUT AUGUST brought big changes to Flores and other people who recently served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill took effect this month and the legislation dramatically increases the educational benefits extended to members of the military who have served at least three months of active duty since Sept. 11, 2001.

The federal law guarantees that most current members of military and veterans from the post-9/11 era can attend any in-state university or college for free.

Those who want to attend a private undergraduate program or graduate school will receive an amount of money equal to that of the most expensive public undergraduate program in the state where their private school is located.

A few private schools and graduate programs have also entered into a special partnership with the Veterans Administration and will provide additional funds to help cover more of their higher tuition costs.

Those who qualify for the new GI benefits also receive a housing allowance, which varies depending on the location of the university and the number of dependents the person has. In some cases, these educational benefits can be transferred to

spouses or children of military personnel.

"This is huge. It is going to make a tremendous difference. ... I am going to be able to quit my job and go to school full time," said Flores, who expects to earn his degree over the next two years if he can take a full schedule of classes.

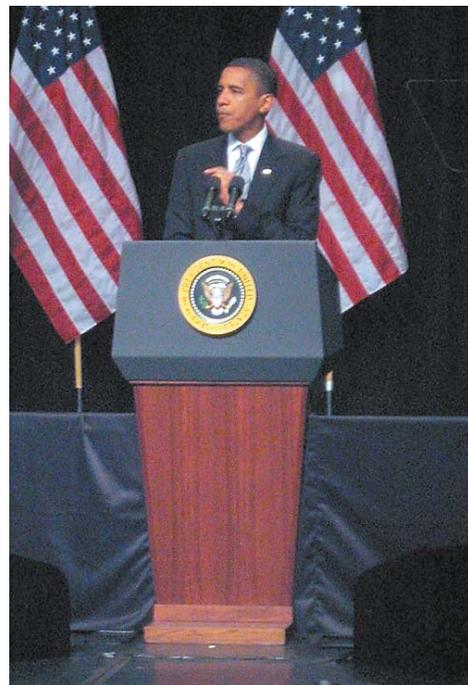
Under the new GI Bill, many veterans enrolled at Mason will receive over \$1,000 more every month for expenses, said Joshua Lawton-Belous, a Vienna native who served as a medic in Iraq.

For example, Lawton-Belous, a Mason senior, said he received \$1,400 monthly to help cover both his tuition and living expenses during previous semesters.

But with the new GI Bill, Lawton-Belous no longer has to worry about covering tu-

"I think a lot more people will be looking at school as an option."

— Jacobo Flores,
GMU Student Veteran



President Barack Obama and Vice-president Joe Biden celebrated the enactment of the Post-9/11 GI Bill at George Mason University Aug. 3

ition costs at all. He will also get \$1,000 each semester for textbooks and about \$1,900 monthly to cover housing and other living expenses.

"A lot of veterans are well aware of the differences between the old GI Bill and the new GI Bill. Some have been putting off school until now because they knew it was coming," said Lawton-Belous, who leads the university's Student Veterans Association.

VIRGINIA'S VETERANS have their own representatives to thank for the new benefits.



PHOTOS BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE/THE CONNECTION

Jonathan Zapien, James Martin, Jacobo Flores and Joshua Lawton-Belous are among the several hundred students at George Mason University who could reap the benefits of a new Post-9/11 GI Bill, which covers the cost of an undergraduate degree for many veterans and active members of the military.

The new GI Bill was the first piece of legislation U.S. Sen. Jim Webb (D-Va.) introduced after he was sworn into office in 2006. One of Webb's top priorities, the GI Bill finally passed in 2008.

"This became law because of Jim Webb's leadership. Period," said former U.S. Sen. John Warner (R-Va.), during the formal unveiling of the new GI Bill on Mason's campus Aug. 3.

Webb, in turn, said Warner was a key political ally when it came to getting the benefits package through the Senate. As senior Virginia senator and former chairman of

the Armed Services Committee, Warner's persuaded several colleagues, including several key Republicans, to support the new GI Bill, said Webb.

President Barack Obama, who spoke at the Mason ceremony, was also one of the post 9/11 GI Bill's co-sponsors when he was a U.S. senator. In his speech at the event, Obama likened the benefits package to the one given to veterans following World War II.

"[The World War II] GI Bill was the backbone of the largest middle class in history. ... It meant going to college was no longer a novelty," said Obama, who added his own grandfather used the GI Bill to get his undergraduate degree.

Warner, a World War II veteran, also took advantage of the GI Bill.

"When I joined the Navy, I hadn't finished high school. ... The GI Bill gave me an engineering degree. I would not be standing here today if it weren't for the GI Bill," he said.

"I would not be standing here today if it weren't for the GI Bill."

— U.S. Sen. John Warner (R-Va.)

Webb graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy, and is a Vietnam veteran. The senator made his opposition to the Iraq War a centerpiece of his campaign four years ago. During the campaign, Webb wore the combat boots of his son Jimmy, a marine who served in Iraq.

Lawton-Belous said veterans on Mason's campus are grateful for the work Webb and Warner did to expand their education benefits.

"It is just not that often that two politicians who represent you do something that has such a huge impact on your life," he said.

VIRGINIA RESIDENTS are likely to benefit disproportionately from the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

According to the 2007 U.S. Census, about 13.4 percent of the commonwealth's adults are veterans, the fourth highest percentage of any state nationwide. By comparison, only about 10.4 percent of American adults are veterans.

Not only are there more people with military connections in Virginia but the commonwealth's veteran population is more likely to have been active duty since September 2001 than those in other states, according to the U.S. Census.

While only 7.2 percent of American veterans were on active duty during the last eight years, about 15 percent of Virginia

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Lake Braddock Golf Challenged Early

Area teams take to difficult International Country Club for Cougar Classic.

BY JASON MACKAY
THE CONNECTION

Unsure of exactly what might happen if he uncorked a full swing with his driver, Kenny Towns was forced to make a few adjustments on Monday afternoon, Aug. 10. Towns, who's entering his junior season on the golf team at Lake Braddock, possesses a powerful swing, but it's one that's almost too powerful sometimes.

At International Country Club for the Cougar Classic, an event that the Bruins haven't played since 2005, Towns was forced to shift his game down a few gears. At the tee box, he frequently elected to stick with his irons rather than try to control his driver and other woods around several doglegs at International.

"I just didn't feel accurate enough with my driver," said Towns, who finished with an 18-hole total of 80. "The holes were short enough to where I could still get my irons out there."

That Towns was even in that situation came as a surprise to many at Lake Braddock. For the past three seasons, the Bruins have played the Stafford County Invitational, which takes place annually at the Gauntlet at Curtis Park, on the same day as the Cougar

Classic. The Bruins finished second in the event last fall.

But this year, head coach Karl Kerns elected not to travel south. Instead, Kerns thought International would offer an appropriate and difficult test. Lake Braddock finished tied with Madison for fourth place with a team score of 341, while Westfield finished first at 302. Westfield's Tim Ritter won the individual title with his score of 74.

Because of its multitude of doglegs and blind tee shots, straight drives off the tee are imperative. By electing to use a shorter club off of the tee, Towns was trying to keep things under control and not make too many mistakes. By contract, Lake Braddock plays its home matches at Twin Lakes Golf Course, a longer, runway-style course that favors big hitters and doesn't punish wayward drives as much.

"Twin Lakes is just straight, and here you have to be more accurate off the tee, which killed me," Towns said.

All of Lake Braddock's players struggled a bit, Kerns said, but it's nothing that should set off any alarms. For the first tournament of the season, Kerns was more than pleased with the Bruins' performance and valued the chal-

lenge that International presented.

"You have to think your way around this course," Kerns said. "We're used to playing at Twin Lakes where, if you get on the Lakes Course, you can just bomb it everywhere and make par from anywhere. Here, if you don't keep it on the fairway you're going to get in trouble and it's going to show on the

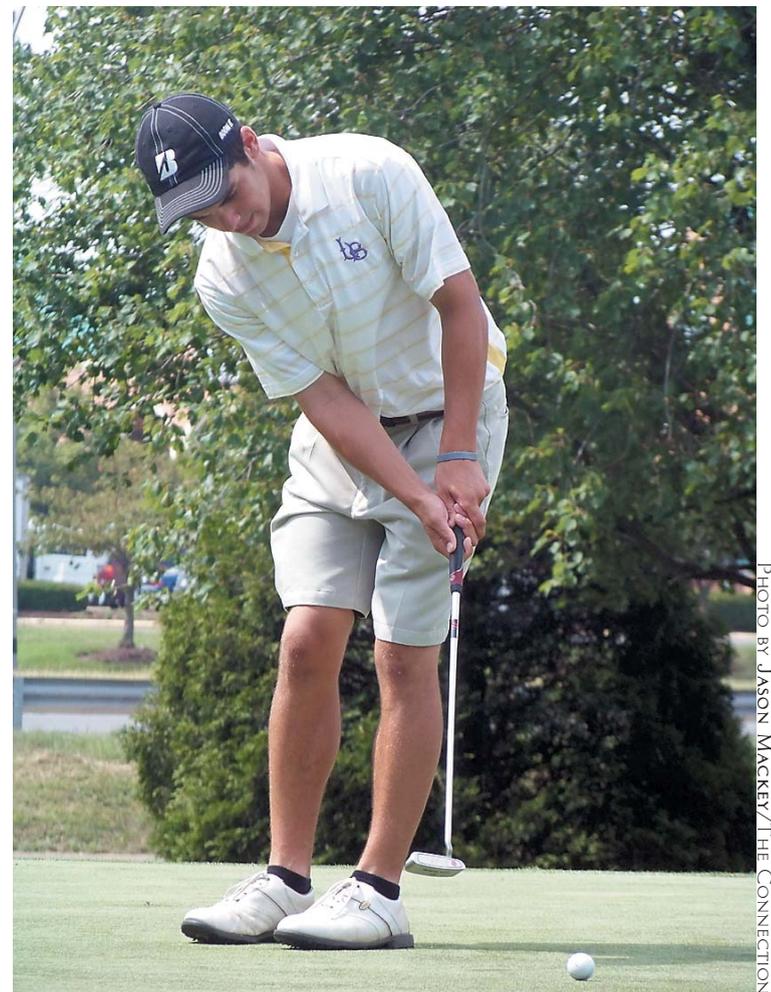


PHOTO BY JASON MACKAY/THE CONNECTION

Lake Braddock's Kenny Towns wasn't entirely pleased with his 18-hole total of 80 at Monday's Cougar Classic. His putting, though, was a strong point. 'I made some putts and saved myself a little bit,' Towns said.

"I just didn't feel accurate enough with my driver."

— Kenny Towns, junior, Lake Braddock Secondary

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Seeking a Second Opinion on Fairfax County Budget

Citizen Budget Committees to provide input on FY2011 budget for county supervisors.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

During his campaign, Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) ran on a platform of civic engagement and community involvement. Several months later, he is taking another step toward that goal, as he followed the lead of fellow board members and created the Braddock District Citizen Budget Committee.

The committee, formed weeks ago, was created in an effort to leverage the expertise and experience of the district's citizens in order to provide valuable input to the board of supervisors on the budgetary issues facing the county in FY 2011.

"The committee will take advantage of the folks we have around here," said Chris Craig, chairman of the Citizen Budget Committee. "Not many counties across the country have the level of expertise and experience that we do here, in terms of volunteers."

Initially, Cook reached out to Craig, founder of Sparks & Craig, LLP and a longtime friend, to head the committee, with a directive for Craig to recruit the rest of the committee. Soon, nearly 30 people agreed to join the committee, including several business leaders, community activists and typical citizens who are accountants, contractors and lawyers among other professions. In addition, the committee will also be forming subcommittees that will be focusing on specific aspects of the budget so that an intensive analysis will occur.

The aspects that the committee will be tackling are issues that both Cook and the citizens on the committee have identified as significant for the formulation of next year's budget. According to Susan Data, director of the county's Department of Management and Budget, the county is already facing an estimated shortfall of \$92 million for the FY 2011 budget. Since much of the fat in the budget was cut to overcome last year's shortfall, any reductions would have

to be carefully vetted. So, Craig and the committee will start with analysis of the school system's budget, since the majority of the budget is allocated to the county's schools.

Cook has also identified the tumbling real estate assessments as an area of concern for the upcoming fiscal year. Cook said that assessments are predicted to fall 18 percent,

"Not many counties across the country have the level of expertise and experience that we do here."

— Chris Craig, chairman, Braddock District Citizen Budget Committee

and as a result, less tax money will be coming from homes and businesses. So, Cook will also look to the committee to find ways to reduce spending to compensate for decreased county revenues.

"Hopefully, the committee will come up with some ideas that are different from what the prevailing ideas may be," Cook said. "They'll take an independent look at county government and see what they can recommend."

The value of Citizen Budget Committees

has already been realized in other districts, as Supervisor Jeff McKay's (D-Lee) has shown. McKay handpicked his committee last year to review the FY 2010 budget, and it ended up meeting every other Saturday for four hours for nine months. According to McKay, since the budget is such an expansive issue, it only helped to have citizens with prior expertise provide additional

in-depth analysis and input.

"[Citizen Budget Committees] are absolutely vital," McKay said. Some of the issues they found in the budget were valuable in finding savings. The budget is so enormous, sometimes we lose sight of the things that affect the everyday citizen."

Since the Braddock committee's inception, it has already met twice.

SEE CITIZEN, PAGE 5

Albo Tops in Money Raised

Del. Dave Albo (R-41), who represents parts of southern Fairfax County, has raised more money than any other candidate running for a Virginia delegate seat this year has. The 16-year incumbent has collected a total of \$339,871 in campaign donations since the start of the current election cycle in 2008.

He was also the top fund raiser among state delegate candidates during the most recent campaign finance period reported, receiving \$127,787 from May 28 to June 30.

"I had the most successful constituent fund raiser that I have ever had in June. I bet you I had 140 to 150 people attend and everyone donated more than the minimum," said Albo about his recent fund-raising success.

Albo faces Democrat and non-profit executive director Greg Werkheiser in a general election Nov. 3. The two candidates also ran against each other in 2005, with Albo beating Werkheiser 51.2 percent to 47.7 percent.

Werkheiser, who didn't enter the race until the beginning of the year, has raised \$199,040 since the beginning of January.

With combined donations of \$34,000, the health care sector, more than any other Virginia industry, has supported Albo financially in 2009. His largest individual donor for the past two years has been the Medical Society of Virginia, for a total of \$17,500.

As chair of the Courts of Justice committee, Albo has been an advocate for tort reform, including reducing the compensation people receive as a result of winning medical malpractice lawsuits. This is a legislative priority for many Virginia hospitals, doctors, dentists and drug companies.

"They support me because I support tort reform and I am in a position to do something about it," said Albo.

But the Werkheiser campaign said voters should have concerns about the amount of money that Albo accepts from medical associations.

"One of our largest challenges is health care reform. Are we really going to be able to trust someone who has taken several thousand dollars from the health care industry to do something about it?" said Dave Mason, Werkheiser's campaign manager.

Albo urged residents to also take a close look at Werkheiser's donors. With a total of \$49,716 contributed, Werkheiser's largest financial supporter is the House of Delegate's Democratic caucus. Albo points to it as an organization that has received a lot of money from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and other unions.

"Democrats don't want to have a giant \$50,000 check from a labor union appear on their campaign finance reports so the money goes through the party instead," said Albo.

Break for Caregivers

Grandparents, aunts, uncles and other relatives raising a child for another family member can drop off the children at the Mott Community Center in Fairfax, Saturday, Aug. 15, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., to play and learn with water activities. There'll be free activities for children, 3-12, who are Fairfax County residents, and lunch and snacks will be provided. Pre-registration is required at 703-324-3517; TTY 703-222-9693. The community center is at 12111 Braddock Road, just off the Fairfax County Parkway. This service is offered via Kinship Care, a joint project between the county's Department of Family Services and Fairfax County Public Schools.

Child ID Kits Are Offered

City of Fairfax Police, in conjunction with the Optimist Club of Central Fairfax, is offering Safe Assured identification kits to all Fairfax County residents. They'll be given out on Tuesday, Aug. 18 and Tuesday, Aug. 25, from 10 a.m. to 2

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

From left are Tim and Marianne Horinko, state Sen. Ken Cuccinelli (R-37), Dale Frizzelle, Tim LeMunyon and Steve Hunt.

On the Campaign Trail

Cuccinelli's attorney general campaign moves forward.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The whole time state Sen. Ken Cuccinelli (R-37) spoke at a fund raiser last week for his campaign for Virginia's attorney general, he never mentioned his Democratic opponent, Steve Shannon, by name. But he fully intends to beat him.

"We have a big advantage over our competitor in the AG's race because we continue to use our grassroots base, and it's all over the state," said Cuccinelli. "I believe, not only are we better on the issues, but our opponent knows it."

He was speaking Thursday evening, Aug. 6, before about two dozen supporters at the Chantilly home of Tim and Marianne Horinko. Attendees included Mike Thompson, who ran against Cuccinelli in the Republican primary for his Senate seat; Jim LeMunyon, currently challenging Del. Chuck Caputo (D-67) for his delegate seat; and former Fairfax County School Board member Steve Hunt, who'll run for Cuccinelli's Senate seat if he's elected attorney general.

This year, said Cuccinelli, the economy is the top priority on everyone's list. While things seem "stagnant" in Northern Virginia, he said, they're a lot worse in other places. So, said Cuccinelli, "It's important to position Virginia for economic recovery as soon as we can, as best as we can."

Overall, he said, Republicans are up in the polls, but it's still early. Nonetheless, Cuccinelli said things look better now for his party in Northern Virginia than they did during the presidential election.

"[Springfield District Supervisor] Pat Herrity came within 1 percent of winning the [Board of Supervisors] chairman's seat," said Cuccinelli. "[Supervisor] John Cook [R-Braddock] won his seat in the midst of Fairfax City, and Republicans won two city council seats in Alexandria, where [Sen. John] McCain only got 27 percent of the vote [in November 2008]."

"Something's going on, and it's going our way," said Cuccinelli. "There's a clearer choice in the voters' minds; they see a difference [between the Democrats and Republicans]."

He said voters see that "one side wants to own and control the auto industry. And health care's about

who's going to tell you what to do. We'll be awash in regulators. That's the left's view of health care." Cuccinelli said all the states bordering Virginia, except North Carolina, have cheaper health care than Virginia "because of all our mandates. A better model is the free market, allowing you to buy health-insurance policies anywhere in the U.S., not just from

Virginia companies."

Cuccinelli believes companies should have the freedom to do business in the best way possible. He's also for property rights and protecting the Constitution. He also said some people want to "curtail our right to work in Virginia," but he'll fight it.

As a lawyer, he said he knows the law better than his opponent does, and that would be a big part of

"Something's going on, and it's going our way."

— State Sen. Ken Cuccinelli (R-37)

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Citizen Input on County Budget

FROM PAGE 3

According to Craig, the first meeting was an orientation of sorts, with Cook providing words of encouragement and taking questions from the citizens. At the second meeting, Data was brought in to give a presentation on how the budget process works, how the budget has evolved since 2000 and gave a forecast for FY 2011. Additionally, she took myriad questions from the committee and also provided a plethora of documents containing all information relevant to the budget process.

CRAIG SAID that the Braddock committee's next meeting is Aug. 19. School Board Vice Chairman Tessie Wilson (Braddock) will be in attendance to provide information on the School Board's budget and that the committee hopes to bring other county officials into future meetings, as well. In the meantime, however, the subcommittees will work to pro-

vide at least preliminary recommendations to Cook by December.

McKay said that the Lee District committee is currently on a break after devoting so much time and energy to the FY 2010 budget last year. However, McKay said that he expects to reconvene the committee next month so that it can start devising ways that could help the county cut into the projected FY 2011 shortfall.

Both Cook and McKay have expressed an interest in maintaining their district's citizen budget committee at least for the next few years, or until economic conditions improve. Utilizing the public's expertise, they said, will always prove invaluable in dissecting any important issue facing the county.

"No single supervisor can solve all aspects or find the inherent deficiencies in the budget," McKay said. "It shows that we have sophisticated and educated citizens in this county and not involving them would be a tremendous waste."

COLLEGE NOTES

Sarah S. Tatlonghari of Burke was named to the spring semester dean's list for University of Scranton.

Elliott Garber of Burke graduated from Tufts University on May 17 with his doctor of veterinary medicine, master of science in comparative biomedical sciences and master of public health. He is the son of Meg and Steven Garber of Burke.

Phillip S. Hess of Burke, a senior majoring in marketing management in the Pamplin College of Business, was one of 127 Hokie Ambassadors, student tour guides, who volunteered for the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Virginia Tech during the 2008-09 academic year.

Anne M. Ward of Burke, a junior majoring in psychology in the College of

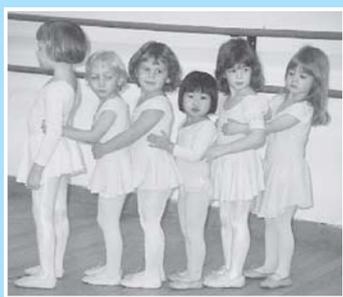
Science, was one of 127 Hokie Ambassadors, student tour guides, who volunteered for the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Virginia Tech during the 2008-09 academic year.

Burke resident **Susan Elizabeth Sherwood** graduated magna cum laude from Mary Washington University in Fredericksburg, with a bachelor of arts in historic preservation.



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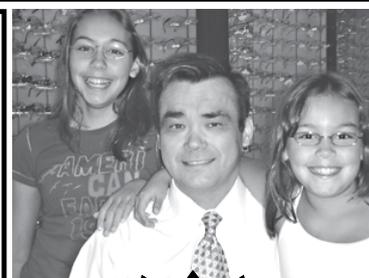


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OPINION

Seeking More Facts from Police

Candidates for Attorney General, General Assembly should encourage more openness from police.

In Virginia, police are entitled to withhold virtually all information from the public. Broad exemptions for police in the state laws pertaining to freedom of information requests leave it to the police themselves to decide what information from police reports of incidents and arrest can and cannot be released. The result is that the public has virtually no access to actual police reports.

Jody Donaldson, spokesman for the Alexandria Police Department, sums up succinctly: "We have a blanket policy to use the exemption in all cases."

This does not serve the public good.

IN MOST states, the public and the press can

access the actual reports filed by the police on the scene of an incident, with narrow exceptions — to protect the names of victims of sexual assault or undercover officers, for example.

In Virginia, the public, the press and even defendants facing charges based on those reports have no rights to see the actual reports. Instead they can request a "summary" of the report. There are few requirements or standards for providing information in these summaries. The summary of the suppressed document, known as "criminal incident information," includes a "general location" and "general description" of the

More

Read Michael Lee Pope's story on suppression of police reports at www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

injuries.

There is no reason for this level of secrecy and obfuscation. Law enforcement agencies that serve the public would be well advised to be open with the public and the press, providing direct access to police reports and documents unless there is a specific compelling reason to redact some information to protect a victim, witness or law enforcement officer. No one would argue to release documents that might endanger someone.

"The exemption for police reports is overly broad, and it should be narrowed," Ginger Stanley, executive director of the Virginia Press Association told Connection reporter Michael Lee Pope. "But police and sheriff associations have very powerful lobbyists, and they do not want this to change," Stanley added.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Tough Medicine To Swallow

County government must be reformed to save it.

BY SUPERVISOR JOHN COOK
R-BRADDOCK

The Board of Supervisors has received its first look at the Fiscal Year 2011 budget, which begins July 1, 2010. The picture is grim, and the view for the following year is no better. Simply put, we do not have the money to continue all of the things we have been doing. If we continue to try to do everything, we will become effective at nothing.

From 2000 to 2007, real estate tax payments doubled. Spending, which raced ahead of population growth and inflation, increased an average of 6 percent per year on the county side and 7 percent on the school side. Old programs were expanded and new programs begun. Now, however, revenue is dropping, and we cannot afford to sustain what we created.

Residential real estate values are projected to drop by at least 5 percent in the coming year, and commercial values are expected to decline at least 18 percent. The budget experts tell us this decline will continue through FY 2012, after which will come several years of only slow growth.

Given current conditions, if the residential property tax rate remains at \$1.04 for FY 2011, school spending is again kept even, no county employees get pay raises for the second straight year, and no county program is increased, we will face a shortfall of over \$315 million. Raising the tax rate to \$1.15, as some advocate, to keep the average tax payment steady, would still require about \$100 million in spending reductions; holding the rate under \$1.15,

as I hope to do, would mean additional cuts. For comparison sake, this year we implemented roughly \$92 million in spending cuts.

In the face of these realities we need to recognize that we must do more than "stay the course." Staying the course means all programs would take spending cuts for at least three years and no new needs would be met. It means, after several years of spending reductions, our fundamental programs and resources — police, fire protection teachers — would not be as good as they are now. Other programs — parks, libraries, human services — would be so gutted as to be only marginally effective. Still others would exist only as shells, but even on life support these programs still cost money.

There is a better way.

We need to set priorities. We must decide what we need most, and other things will need to go away. Core functions of government must be funded at high enough levels to be effective, while less critical programs and agencies should be consolidated or eliminated altogether.

That's tough medicine, but isn't that what we do with our family budgets? If our household income goes down, do we cut our food, clothing and vacation budgets all by 10 percent? No. We forego the vacation and keep the food and clothing. The county must do the same.

If we continue down our current path, all programs, including our best, will deteriorate. However, if we prioritize, fully fund our most important programs, make consolidations and eliminations, our government will be smaller, but it will be effective. My budget advisory committee is probing for eliminations and reductions. Together, we can chart a path through this crisis and come out of it with a smaller government, but one that effectively performs its core functions and retains the significant standard of living we enjoy.

EDITORIAL

COMMENTARY

Child Care Insead?

To the Editor:

It's astonishing that after Virginia spends \$2.2 billion on a Northrop Grumman computer contract that Gov. Tim Kaine (D) is now announcing that at least \$13.7 million of the Child Care & Development (ARRA) stimulus money will be used to create an

automated system for child care data tracking of child care providers. Legislators and taxpayers should be asking why the largest contract in Virginia history is not enough to cover this cost? Will this \$13.7 million be going to Northrop Grumman too? Using the money to pay consultants to set up new systems does not have the broad impact and purpose envisioned in the stimulus package. We say the money should go directly to child-care services for the more than 8,000 families on the child care waiting list.

LETTERS

automated system for child care data tracking

of child care providers.

Legislators and taxpayers should be asking why the largest contract in Virginia history is not enough to cover this cost? Will this \$13.7 million be going to Northrop Grumman too? Using the money to pay consultants to set up new systems does not have the broad impact and purpose envisioned in the stimulus package. We say the money should go directly to child-care services for the more than 8,000 families on the child care waiting list.

John Horejsi
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Vienna

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PEOPLE

Army National Guard Pfc. Nathan P. Davis has graduated from the Infantryman One Station Unit Training at Fort Benning, Columbus, Ga. Davis is a 1990 graduate of Lake Braddock Secondary School.

Navy Seaman Brandon J. Frayser, son of Kimberlee J. and Bradford A. Frayser of Burke, recently completed U.S. Navy basic training and was meritoriously promoted to his current rank at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill. Frayser is a 2002 graduate of Notre Dame Regional High School of Cape Girardeau, Mo.

Coast Guard Seaman Leigh R.

Van Lear, daughter of Barbara R. and Richard Van Lear of Burke, recently graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Recruit Training Center in Cape May, N.J.

Navy Seaman Brett E. Nary, a 2003 graduate of Lake Braddock Secondary School, recently completed U.S. Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill.

Karanveer Singh, son of Gurdeep Singh and Ravinder Kaur of Burke, was named to the Randolph-Macon Academy dean's list for the fourth quarter. A student must attain a grade point average above 3.3 to be named to the dean's

list. Karanveer is a rising senior at the Academy.

Burke residents **Elizabeth Anne Bouton, Alexander B. Cross, Alyssa M. Johnson, Sarah Elizabeth Johnson, Stefanie Michelle Johnson and Amibeth Patchan Griffin** have graduated from Mary Washington University in Fredericksburg.

Burke residents **Matthew Blackington, Romina Retamal, Ronna Stockard, Shannon Wells and Brian Yeagley** graduated from Marymount University on May 10 at DAR Constitution Hall.

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Ride to Top on Classic Rock

Young local band The Fuzed takes audience members by surprise with classic rock tunes.

BY SARAH MOORE
THE CONNECTION

“Are those kids in the band?” a man in the crowd whispered. While the band on stage finished setting up, the curious audience at Jaxx Night Club in Springfield on Friday, July 17 grabbed their drinks and headed down to the floor to get a closer look.

The band named The Fuzed was a noticeable deviation from Jaxx’s typical lineup and seemed to mimic a scene from the movie “School of Rock.” The Fuzed members include guitarist and lead vocalist Cheska Zaide of Ashburn who is 12, lead guitarist Trevor Fichtner of Haymarket and drummer Jake Rosenthal of Oak Hill who are both 13. Bassist Connor Ginger of Gainesville is the senior member of the group at age 14. Though many “tween” bands like Hannah Montana and the Jonas Brothers have gained notoriety with pop-rock melodies and catchy lyrics, The Fuzed’s set list reflected more mature musical tastes.

“We play classic rock covers that everyone knows,” said Ginger. “We all like different styles of music but we all like to play classic rock.”

The Fuzed will be performing Saturday, Aug. 15, at 7 p.m., outdoors in the center of Old Town Fairfax. The proceeds for the show will benefit Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children.

Two of the band’s biggest hits at Jaxx were Ozzy Osbourne’s “Crazy Train” and “Sweet Child of Mine” by Guns ‘n Roses. This hit caught the attention of headlining group

Forever the Sickest Kids (FTSK) while The Fuzed was playing at Loudoun’s YouthFest in June. FTSK unexpectedly asked The Fuzed to open for them later that evening.

While their age sometimes makes balancing busy schedules difficult, Rina Zaide, Cheska’s mother, said it can also be advantageous.

“They are very noticeable because they are very young” she said. “So when people saw them they were like, ‘Whoa. We were surprised. We were like, cute kids-oh they’re going to

“They always manage to surprise people.”

— Rina Zaide, Ashburn

play cute silly songs. But no, they can rock.’ They always manage to surprise people.”

Band members cited such musical influences as Aerosmith, The Beatles, KISS and AC/DC. Besides covers, The Fuzed also has two original songs and they are working on more.

The young musicians met and formed the band after Zaide and Fichtner met through Bach to Rock, a music school catering to kids interested in performing. Later they recruited Ginger and Rosenthal.

Being in a band, the children and their parents said, has been enjoyable but has required lots of effort from both the children and their parents.

“If you want to know if we know all their songs, the answer is yes. We’ve heard them all a billion times” said John Fichtner

BALANCING SCHOOL, scouts and extracurricular activities alongside of band practices several times a week has been difficult, their parents said. During the summer, the band practices for several hours, six days a week. But as long as the children are en-



DONATED PHOTO

Connor Ginger, Austin Bello of FTSK, Cheska Zaide, Trevor Fichtner, Marc Stewart of FTSK and Jake Rosenthal at the Loudoun Youth Fest. The Fuzed is playing this Saturday in Old Town Fairfax.

joying themselves, their parents said, they would continue being supportive.

“We ask them, ‘Do you guys want to take the day off today?’ and they’re like, ‘Nope’” said Andrea Rosenthal, Jake’s mother. “If they’re earning some high school money making music rather than bagging groceries and it becomes their high school job, it’s good, as long as they enjoy it.”

Members of The Fuzed, though, said they

are aiming a little higher.

“We want to go to the top” said Ginger. Other future goals include “World touring like AC/DC. Like Australia to Ireland to the U.S.A. and everything” said Trevor Fichtner.

Before world tours, though, The Fuzed will continue to play in and around Northern Virginia at events like this Friday’s show in Old Town Fairfax and at the Montgomery County Fair later this month.

Submit a community event to the calendar, send an e-mail to burke@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-917-6440 with questions. Deadline for calendar listings is two weeks prior to event.

FRIDAY/AUG. 14

- The United States Navy Band.** 7:30 p.m. Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. 703-324-SHOW.
- Night Music.** 7:30 p.m., at Royal Lake Park, 5344 Gainsborough Drive, Fairfax.
- Traditional Irish Music.** 7-9:30 p.m. Live music in the restaurant. The Auld Shebeen Irish Pub and Restaurant, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. 703-293-9600.
- The Auld Shebeen Live in the Cellar** from 10 p.m.-1:30 a.m. \$5 cover. The Auld Shebeen Irish Pub and Restaurant, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax.

- 703-293-9600.
- The Dreamscape Project. TBA.** 10 p.m., at Fat Tuesday’s, 10673 Braddock Road, Fairfax. 703-385-5717.

SATURDAY/AUG. 15

- Traditional Irish Session.** 12-2 p.m. Come listen to musicians practice and play. The Auld Shebeen Irish Pub and Restaurant, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. 703-293-9600.
- Traditional Irish Music.** 7-9:30 p.m. Live music in the restaurant. The Auld Shebeen Irish Pub and Restaurant, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. 703-293-9600.
- The Auld Shebeen D.J. Dance Party** from 10 p.m.-1:30 a.m. \$5 cover charge, 21 and up only. Ladies free until midnight. The Auld Shebeen Irish Pub and Restaurant, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. 703-293-9600.
- Special Event 2009 – The Nico**

CALENDAR

- Blues Band.** 10 p.m., at Fat Tuesday’s, 10673 Braddock Road, Fairfax. 703-385-5717.
- When Mosby Owned the Night.** 2 p.m., at the Civil War Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Learn about Col. John Singleton Mosby in this free lecture and program by Richard Gillespie, director of education at Mosby Heritage Area. For information, call 703-591-0560.
- Neighborhood Plant Clinic.** 10 a.m.-1 p.m., at Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. 703-978-5600. The Fairfax County Master Gardeners Association gives tips and strategies. Adults.
- Fairfax County Master Gardeners Association.** 10 a.m., at City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax, 703-293-6227. Master Gardeners provide horticultural tips, information, techniques and advice to home gardeners. Adults.

- Nature Night Hike.** Hikers 7 and older will learn the nocturnal activities of the residents in the surrounding woods at Lake Accotink Park from 8:30-10 p.m. Meet at the Visitors Center, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. Bring a flashlight. \$5 per adult and \$3 per child under 16. To make prepaid reservation, call 703-569-0285.
- The Fuzed** will be playing classic rock and originals 7 p.m., in Old Town Fairfax. Enjoy food from Old Town restaurants, bring chairs and watch a band, watch a great movie (“Pink Panther 2”) and relax with friends and family. The proceeds will benefit Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children. For more, visit www.thefuzed.com or www.myspace.com/thefuzedrockband.
- SUNDAY/AUG. 16**
- N-Scale Model Trains** will be running in the community room and the caboose at the Fairfax Station

- Railroad Museum from 1-4 p.m. Admission is \$2 for adults and \$1 for children. The museum is located at 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. 703-425-9225. www.fairfax-station.org.
- Sunday Brunch.** 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Reservations always welcome. The Auld Shebeen Irish Pub and Restaurant, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. 703-293-9600.
- Neighborhood Plant Clinic.** 1 p.m., at Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. 703-644-7333. The Fairfax County Master Gardeners Association gives tips and advice. Adults.
- MONDAY/AUG. 17**
- Neighborhood Plant Clinic.** 6 p.m., at Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. 703-644-7333. The Fairfax County Master Gardeners Association gives tips and advice. Adults.

Warner, Webb Unveil New GI Bill at GMU

FROM PAGE 2

veterans have served during that time. Virginia veterans also tend to be younger. About 8.4 percent of American veterans are between 18 and 35, compared to about 12.6 percent of Virginia veterans.

But in general, Virginia veterans have been more likely to pursue higher education, with about 34 percent of earning a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to just 25 percent nationwide.

In Fairfax County, veterans are actually more likely to earn their bachelor's degree than the county's general population. According to the U.S. Census, about 70 percent of Fairfax's veterans have completed college, compared to just 58 percent of the county's residents overall.

THE LARGE VETERAN presence in Fairfax may have had an impact on George Mason University, which is particularly sensitive to the needs of the military community.

With the exception of Old Dominion University, which runs special online courses for active military personnel, Mason has the largest military and veteran population of any school in Virginia, said Michael Johnson, the school's director of military services.

Last year, Mason had 983 students who had special status through the military, including spouses and other dependents. At least 385 of those Mason students were veterans, said Johnson, who has been at the school for nine months.

Several student veterans at Mason said Washington, D.C. is a magnet for military and ex-military personnel alike because of job opportunities in national security and defense-related fields.

People currently in the military and veterans could also have found Mason particularly attractive because it is significantly cheaper compared than other four-year schools in the metropolitan area.

But Mason is also the only school in Virginia and one of only a handful of schools in the country that has devoted staff, like Johnson, to veterans and military personnel. The university created Johnson's position nine months ago at the suggestion of the campus' Student Veterans Association, which has a little over 70 members.

"Creating this brand new position shows a willingness to work with veterans. Espe-

cially when George Mason was facing budget cuts and was having to cut other positions, it was quite a statement," said Lawton-Belous.

According to Johnson, active members of the military and veterans have different needs than typical undergraduate students.

They usually are at least four years older than students fresh from high school and are paying their own way through college, which gives them a

different perspective than a typical undergraduate.

For example, Reston resident Jonathan Zapien served in the Army's Special Forces for five years before coming to Mason to finish his undergraduate degree. The veteran, who enlisted in 2002 following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, works full time and is married to an American University law student.

Other differences exist as well. The military tends to instill a certain personal discipline in people, so veterans don't tend to struggle with time management as much as younger students, said Johnson.

But students with a military background have their own set of issues. This year, Johnson secured a grant that would allow him to hire a psychological counselor to focus exclusively on Mason's military community.

Unfortunately, Johnson said it can take several weeks for a person to obtain mental health services through the Veterans Administration. The counselors employed through the college are not properly trained to deal with some of the issues that veterans and active military members bring back from war, he said.

The Veterans Administration told Johnson to expect a 20 percent to 25 percent increase in its student veteran and students service member population as a result of the GI Bill.

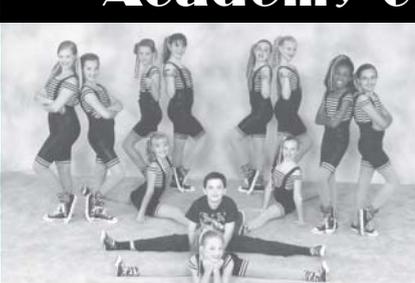
Johnson expects that community colleges would see a larger influx of students at first. Johnson, who is a veteran himself, said the military has had to lower its standards in order to keep recruitment numbers for enlisted soldiers up and he suspects that a lot of people who want to take advantage of benefits are not prepared to enter a four-year school directly.

"I think a lot more people will be looking at school as an option. Guys who would think about re-enlisting may be looking to get out now," Flores said.

"A lot of veterans are well aware of the differences between the old GI Bill and the new GI Bill."

— Joshua Lawton-Belous

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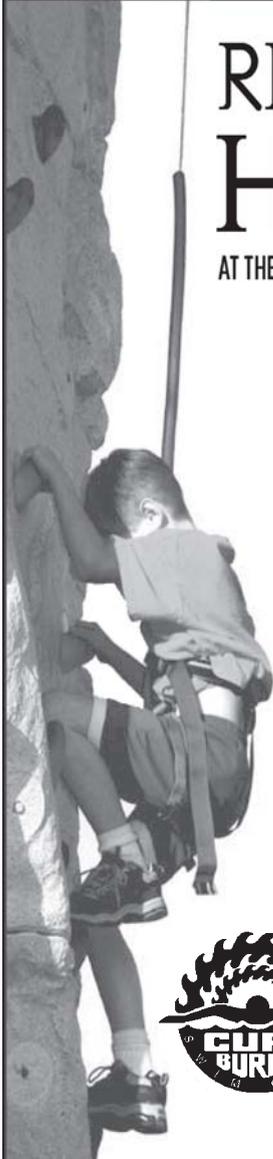
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PHOTO COURTESY OF BOB WAHL

In the fifth inning of the Saturday, Aug. 8 Under Armour All-America Baseball Game, West Springfield pitcher Bobby Wahl allowed one hit and recorded a strikeout.

One More Wahl in Wrigley

West Springfield pitcher Bobby Wahl travels to Chicago for showcase baseball game.

BY JASON MACKEY
THE CONNECTION

Bobby Wahl traveled approximately 1,400 miles by plane over the course of four days to produce three stats: one inning pitched, one hit and one strikeout. That's how Wahl's pitching line would've read had it been announced by the game's official scorer in Wrigley Field's press box.

But even though Wahl's statistical contributions to the Under-Armour All-America Baseball Game on Saturday, Aug. 8 were minimal, the memories from a weekend spent rubbing elbows with Cal Ripken Jr. and Ernie Banks, as well as pitching in one of Major League Baseball's most historic ballparks will last a lifetime.

"It was one of those things that didn't seem real at the time," said the right-handed Wahl, a rising senior at West Springfield who allowed a hit to the first batter he faced, which he erased with a double play before striking out the third hitter of the fifth inning.

Wahl was one of 36 players selected to participate in the game, which pitted Team One against Baseball Factory, and he was the only one from Maryland, Washington D.C. or Virginia. It's the second year for the game, which took place at Wrigley last summer as well.

About a month ago, Wahl fielded a call

from Steve Bernhardt, the executive vice president of baseball operations for Baseball Factory, a recruiting resource of sorts that combines instruction, tournament competition and college planning and placement.

And when Bernhardt asked Wahl to participate, it didn't take very long to produce an answer.

"[Bernhardt] gave me a call and asked if I wanted to participate in this and it was a sure yes, right away," Wahl said.

Besides pitching, Wahl excelled this season as a hitter at West Springfield, producing a .380 batting average with seven home runs and 29 RBIs for the reigning Patriot District and Northern Region champions. But, it's on the mound where Wahl has been most effective. In 62 innings this spring, Wahl recorded 101 strikeouts and had an ERA of 1.59.

His pitching has also been one of the primary reasons why Wahl has already committed to play baseball in the spring of 2011 at the University of Mississippi, joining Matt and Mike Snyder of Westfield. But for the time being, Wahl relished the chance to meet his childhood hero and experience something like pitching at Wrigley.

After arriving on Thursday around 12:30 p.m., Wahl checked into the team hotel. There, the players had an entire, over-sized room to themselves, and they spent the next few hours getting acquainted with one other

through ping-pong and video games.

A tour of Wrigley followed later that afternoon, with visits to the clubhouses included. For dinner, the players ate at the stadium and met Ripken to receive their game jerseys.

"He's always been my favorite player," said Wahl of Ripken, who set the record for consecutive games played when he played in his 2,131th straight game on Sept. 6, 1995. "It was real cool because I had never had a chance to meet him, and finally I was able to meet him and talk to him."

The next day, Wahl worked out with his teammates at Wrigley and received "everything you could ever want" in the way of Under-Armour practice gear. After lunch, there was supposed to be a home-run derby qualifying round but that was rained out, and the players finished off the evening by attending that evening's Chicago White Sox/Cleveland Indians game at U.S. Cellular Field.

On Saturday, Wahl lived the life of a big leaguer. He had breakfast at the ballpark. He took batting practice and some infield. He ate lunch at the ballpark. Following the home run derby, the game started and Wahl waited his turn in the bullpen, making small talk with some of the top pitchers from around the country.

"It was a great honor," said Wahl, who's one inning of work lasted less than 10 minutes. "Being [one of the] top 36 in the nation, it was something that I was extremely happy to be able to do. Being able to represent Virginia and the class of 2010, it was crazy. It was a great experience."

WEEK IN SPORTS

Academically Inclined

Kari Morrison is the career and season leader for ground balls as a women's lacrosse player at Virginia Tech, with 166 over a three-year career after transferring from Colgate and 65 during the 2008 season. She also ranks second in career saves (574) and third for saves in a season (207). But on Tuesday, Aug. 4, Morrison did something else remarkable as a Hokie when she made the All-Atlantic Coast Conference Women's Lacrosse Academic Team for the third straight time. A Bishop Ireton graduate and Springfield native, Morrison recently earned her degree in nutrition and exercise. Morrison, a goalkeeper, recorded 189 saves this past season with a save percentage of .467.

Joseck Shines

Hanna Joseck of the U-16 NOVA Blaze Blue was recognized as a Player of the Game at the 2009 Fast Nationals, fastpitch softball tournament in Ocoee, Fla. Players of the Game are chosen by the opposing team's coaching staff. The Fast Nationals tournament brings the top travel softball teams and players in the country to one venue, where teams compete to become the 2009 Fast National Champions.

Silver Simone

Competing at the 18th Annual Maccabiah Games in Israel, Fairfax native Simone Friedman had a successful showing. Friedman, who's a level 10 gymnast and trains at Capital Gymnastics in Burke, brought home three silver medals. She competed in the all-around competition for Team USA and earned a silver medal, and in the finals she earned silver on both the uneven bars and floor exercise.

Local Dukes Represent

Two former James Madison University soccer players were recognized as members of the Colonial Athletic Association's Silvery Anniversary team for men's soccer. Fairfax native and Robinson graduate Kevin Knight and Springfield native and West Springfield graduate Patrick McSorley were elected to the team, which was voted on by a panel of current and former

SEE WEEK IN SPORTS, PAGE 11

SPORTS

Tournament Starts Golf Season

FROM PAGE 3

scorecard.”

South County’s top player, sophomore Jake Carey, played in the same four-player grouping as Towns and could commiserate with him. Carey shot an 83 on the day, a total that he wasn’t totally displeased, but still a number that could be improved upon with some consistency.

“I’m just exhausted. It was a tough day,” Carey said. “I hit a few good shots, a few bad shots. But overall it wasn’t awful.”

John Caulfield is in his third year of work as the South County head coach and each year the team has improved. In 2007, South County finished with its highest district seeding in school history (second) but missed out on the regional tournament because of a tiebreaker. In 2008, the Stallions reached the region tournament for the first time in school his-

tory.

A 20-year member of International, Caulfield was well aware of the challenge the course presented and even sent an e-mail to his team over the weekend to suggest a few tips for certain holes. As a result, South County finished fifth with a score of 343.

Still, Caulfield wasn’t measuring results. He simply wanted to see his team put forth a quality performance on a difficult course.

“I didn’t expect to see a lot of arithmetic results on the scorecard,” Caulfield said, “but I wanted to see them get the experience of playing at a different place and playing against this level of competition because that’s more what the postseason stuff is going to feel like.”

ROBINSON finished second with a team score of 315, led by Alex Austin’s third-place 75 and John Dupre’s fourth-place 76. To read more about the Rams, visit www.connectionnewspapers.com.

FROM PAGE 10

coaches and commemorates the CAA’s 25th year of existence. During his career as a Duke, Knight became the only player in school history to earn All-CAA honors during each of his four years. McSorley, JMU’s all-time leader in goals (42) and points (103), led the Dukes to a 73-14-6 record during his tenure, including four NCAA tournament appearances

WEEK IN SPORTS

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Cuccinelli Campaign

FROM PAGE 4

his job. "It's what attorney generals do — backing up the prosecutors," he said. "And I expect to continue pressing ahead on all these issues." Cuccinelli said gangs represent "the single, greatest, violent threat in Virginia. We have to stay aggressive against this threat to public safety."

Shannon, who serves as a special counsel for law firm Odin, Feldman & Pittleman, P.C., was a former prosecutor.

REGARDING MENTAL health, a cause that Cuccinelli has championed throughout his career, he wants to improve the outpatient treatment system for mentally challenged people. "They should have government assistance and responsibility for protecting them," he said.

Cuccinelli is also a proponent of offshore drilling. "It's an economic-development opportunity for us," he said. "We'd be able to do this work and add tens of thousands of jobs in Southeastern Virginia. And more cost-effective energy would make that whole swath of the state economically competitive and not just with the U.S., but with the world. I have an energy background

and, if I'm elected, I will be aggressive in this area."

Additionally, he wants government to be more open and accessible to citizens while, at the same time, keeping their private information private. Cuccinelli said the government and other entities should only be privy to this information where absolutely necessary, such as when someone applies for a driver's license.

"We also have to continue fighting against Internet predators, dealing with fraud against older residents and sexual offenders against children," he said. "I'm also for consolidating consumer protection." Currently, it's under several branches of government so, said Cuccinelli, "There's no responsibility" and consumers have a tough time getting help.

Overall, he said, "We're ahead on the issues, but our opponent is ahead in money, by \$900,000. But we had two, solid competitors for the nomination — he didn't. So we need your support with donations to catch up. I probably need 1.2 to 1.3 million votes, and I can't knock on that many doors, so we need both small and large donors to help raise money." Donations may be made at www.KC4AG.com.

FROM PAGE 4

p.m., at the City of Fairfax Police Department, 3730 Old Lee Highway.

Parents will receive a full-color photo ID and a mini-CD containing digital fingerprints, a digital photo, video showing movement and mannerisms, a general physical description, vital personal information, and a family code word.

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School Backpacks Needed

Each year, Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM) collects backpacks for the 24 elementary, middle and high schools in Centreville, Chantilly, Clifton, Fairfax Station and the 22033 area of Fairfax (including Greenbriar, Fair Oaks and Fair Lakes). But with so many local families unable to provide them for their children, WFCM is asking area residents to help it fulfill this need.

These new backpacks are provided at no cost to those students receiving free or reduced-price school lunches. And for the 2009-2010 school year, some 1,100

backpacks are needed. Donations of new, large-sized backpacks (without wheels) should be dropped off before Aug. 21 at WFCM, 13981 Metrotech Drive in Chantilly. They'll then be delivered directly to the schools during the week of Aug. 24. For more information, contact Pam Ryan at development@wfcma.org.

Site Determined

Beijing had the 2008 Summer Games. Vancouver will host the 2010 Winter Games. And the 2015 World Police and Fire Games? They'll be right here in Fairfax County. A group of Fairfax representatives from the police, fire and sheriff's departments, Team Fairfax recently learned that it was awarded the right to host the event, which will include events at George Mason University, the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy, various regional parks, the National Mall, Nationals Park, Reston Town Center and Quantico Marines Corps Base. In its 30th year of existence, the WPFG brings together participants from more than 65 countries, and the event has been going on since 1985. This year will coincide with the 75th Anniversary of the Fairfax Police Department. The WPFG includes over 60 different sporting events, which range from soccer, basketball and tennis to stair climbing, shooting and SWAT exercises.

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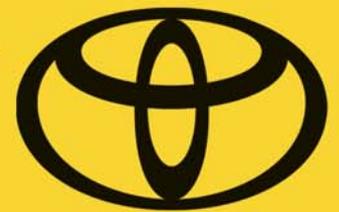
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