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CONNECTION
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2009 proved to be a strong year for local high school sports teams and the top sports stories for 2010 are beginning to take shape.

Year of Sports

SPORTS, PAGE 10



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FILE PHOTOS
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Race To Replace Cuccinelli: Hunt vs. Marsden

Voters will choose new state senator in a special election Jan. 12.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE CONNECTION

The last time voters elected a new representative to Virginia's 37th State Senate district in Western Fairfax County was during an August 2002 special election.

Republican Ken Cuccinelli, winning just over 10,000 votes, was the victor in that contest. A little over 18,000 residents participated overall, though the district included well over 100,000 eligible voters at the time.

Despite the low voter turnout, Cuccinelli was able to capitalize on the success of that first political victory seven years ago. He went on to win two more State Senate elections and, last month, Cuccinelli was elected to be Virginia's next Attorney General.

Before he can take on the duties of his new statewide office in January, Cuccinelli must step down from his State Senate seat.

Former Fairfax County School Board member Steve Hunt, a Republican, and Del. Dave Marsden (D-41) are vying to replace Cuccinelli in the 37th State Senate District.

They will face off in a special election Jan. 12, a contest that history shows us is likely to determine who is the state senator for the next several years.

THE 37TH SENATE District includes Chantilly, Centreville as well as parts of Fairfax, Fairfax Station, Burke and Springfield. Local political observers consider it to lean Republican, though its electorate has also favored Democrats in some recent elections.

Cuccinelli beat his Democratic opponent by a slim margin of 92 votes during the most recent 37th District State Senate contest in 2007. In 2008, President Barack Obama also won the 37th Senate District with 55 percent of the vote.

However, this past November, 37th District voters appeared solidly in the Republican camp. Virginia's Gov.-elect Bob McDonnell (R) won 57 percent of the vote

in the State Senate District during the 2009 general election.

Approximately 1,900 people also showed up to participate in the seat's Republican primary on Dec. 1, a much higher turnout than local Republican activists expected.

In a three-way race, Hunt won the Republican primary with 955 votes, just over 50 percent of all ballots cast. Opponent Marianne Horinko garnered 479 votes, approximately 25 percent of all ballots cast, and another candidate, William Nance, collected 469 votes, also about 25 percent of all ballots cast.

Fairfax County Republican Committee Chairman Anthony Bedell said Hunt's large primary victory over two other people should give the candidate momentum headed into the special election. The Republican, who was an at-large member of the School Board from 2004-07, also has more name recognition than many other candidates would.

But many people said the Republicans can take nothing for granted in a special election, where very few people are expected to show up at the polls.

"Special elections are always unpredict-

able. It is always about who comes out," said Supervisor Patrick Herrity (R-Springfield), who is backing Hunt in the election.

MARSDEN, who has been a member of the House of Delegates since 2005, is also an unusual Democrat. The candidate was, in fact, an active Republican for most of his life.

Marsden worked for his Republican predecessor in the General Assembly, Del. Jim Dillard (R-41). He also served as a political appointee, the head of the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, in former Republican Gov. Jim Gilmore's administration.

Marsden decided to switch political parties as a result of his experience working for both Gilmore and Gov. Mark Warner (D). The candidate was still running the commonwealth's juvenile justice agency when Warner replaced Gilmore in 2002.

"I was in the Gilmore administration and they were very narrowly focused on some very ill-advised public policy matters. The Warner administration was so good when it came in...They were interested in helping those of us who were running agencies. They wanted to make us better at what we did and that was very inspiring," said Marsden.

SEE HUNT, PAGE 9

"Special elections are always unpredictable."

— Supervisor Patrick Herrity (R-Springfield)

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The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors
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Candidates Get Down to Business

State Senate candidates meet with business owners at a networking breakfast.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

The candidates for Attorney General-elect Ken Cuccinelli's vacant 37th District State Senate seat kicked off their last week of campaigning before the special election with a meeting with local business leaders Wednesday, Jan. 6 at a networking breakfast.

Hosted by the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, the breakfast was the only joint appearance for Del. David Marsden (D-41) and Republican challenger and former School Board

member Steve Hunt leading up to the Jan. 12 election. The candidates each spoke on the significant issues facing the district and took questions from the attendees. As expected, jobs and the economy dominated the discussion.

"I think we need to have our House of

Delegates and State Senate be more pro-business," said Chamber of Commerce member Kathleen McDermott. "We need to have less regulation and more of an effort to support developing small businesses."

McDermott's feelings echoed the sentiment of many of the event's attendees, many of whom are small business owners, and the candidates seized the opportunity to reach out to their audience. Marsden and Hunt were given 10 minutes to speak before taking questions, and both focused their speeches on economic recovery, including job growth, taxes and government regulation.

"I'm looking [to vote] for the person who is going to stand up for the small business owner."

— John Faith

Marsden repeatedly stressed Virginia's rating as the "best state to do business in," as selected by Forbes Magazine, and outlined his plans on how to maintain that rating. He said that the state needed to keep the rating intact so that new small businesses would have incentive to open their doors in this area and to do that, he said, Richmond must take

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PHOTO BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION

State Senate candidates Steve Hunt (R) and Del. David Marsden (D-41) prepare to speak at the networking breakfast.

a pro-business, pro-growth stance. A pro-business stance, Marsden said, would include less regulation as well as ensuring that the governor's Opportunity Fund has money in it and that the Small Business Financing Authority remains able to guarantee small business loans.

"Job growth has not been strong," Marsden said. "We need to make sure our

new governor have money in the Opportunity Fund and we need a small business loan guarantee to get [the number of] jobs back up. Small business is the engine that drives Virginia and I'm your partner in Richmond that will make sure you are not hindered."

Hunt, on the other hand, said that a mar

SEE BUSINESS. PAGE 7

Final Hurdle in Sight for Middle School

FCPS to choose builder by end of February.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

Six years ago, Lorton residents saw South County Secondary School's enrollment stretch beyond capacity, and immediately began fighting for a remedy. Though a several bumps popped up along the way, the new decade is bringing a reward for those efforts: a new middle school.

After a process that included a land swap, a bond referendum vote and countless discussions and debates, ground is nearly ready to break for the long-awaited South County Middle School.

"The combination of our six-year efforts to build the middle school are likely to be met with the school board's approval of a contractor to build the school," said School Board Member Dan Storck (Mount Vernon). "I'm excited about what this means for our South County community and our students who will be able to move from an overcrowded high school used as a secondary school to a brand new middle school."

That approval, according to Project Manager Mark Hilty of the Fairfax County Pub-

lic Schools Department of School Facilities and Transportation, is the final hurdle of three to clear for the construction of the school. The first major obstacle was navigated successfully on Oct. 14, when the Fairfax County Park Authority authorized the land exchange with Fairfax County Public Schools. The swap consisted of the transfer of a 40-acre vacant parcel of land off Laurel Crest Drive owned by the school system for a 40-acre parcel of land within Laurel Hill Park owned by the Park Authority. The former parkland will be used to build the 176,000 square foot middle school adjacent to South County Secondary.

Once the land for the middle school was acquired, the next step was the secure funding for construction through a bond referendum vote. The referendum, which voters approved on Nov. 3, called for the allocation of \$50 million for the construction and passed by a final tally of 70.2 percent to 29.79 percent.

Now, the only hurdle left to clear is to award the contract to actually build the school. Hilty said that the building has already been designed, and that they are in

the final stages of county permitting, which included the approval of an HVAC system, electrical system, storm water management system and more. After county permitting is completed, Hilty said, bidding will be opened. "We are 99 percent done, and we don't expect any problems with that permitting," he said.

According to Hilty, the job was only made public to pre-qualified contractors Monday Jan. 4, and currently, the school system is waiting for those contractors to review the architectural plans and decide if they want to bid on the job. Then, on Feb. 3, bids will be accepted and by the end of the month, a contractor will be chosen. According to Hilty, the choice will ultimately go to the contractor who can do the job for the lowest price. However, as a result of the down economy, construction prices have plummeted and the school system believes that the school can be built for \$28,500,000 instead of the \$50 million

originally allocated, so they are looking for someone to come in under that number.

"Virginia is traditionally a low-bid state," Hilty said. "So unless there is a problem with the low bidder, the job will go to that bidder."

Hilty said that once a contractor is chosen, construction on the school is likely to begin within weeks. Since the process is on

schedule, Hilty said, construction should be completed by January 2012, and once it is completed, students will be moved in immediately. Though no problems appear to be on the horizon and permit approval and bidding appears to be on schedule, those who spent years advocating for the school will not be satisfied until the fruits of their labor become tangible.

"It's still hard to believe that we've come this far," said South County Middle School Solutions Co-Chair Christine Morin. "We're all very excited, but we will continue to persevere until we see bricks and mortar."

"I'm excited about what this means for our South County community and our students."

— School Board Member Dan Storck (Mount Vernon)

OPINION

Happy New Year

Keep in touch.

At the Connection, we invite our readers to fill us in, literally. As we begin the New Year, we are reminded that we need to hear from our readers.

As local, weekly newspapers, the Connection's mission is to bring the news you need about your community, to give you the information you need to enjoy the best things in and near your community, to advocate for community good, to call attention to unmet needs, to provide a forum for dialogue on local concerns, and to celebrate and record milestones and events in community and people's lives.

To succeed at any of that, we need your help. Let us know how we're doing and let us know what is going on in your part of the community. If you have questions or ideas, call us or send us an e-mail.

We invite you to send letters to the editor or

to send an e-mail letting us know about something you especially liked or didn't like about our coverage.

We appreciate readers' ideas. If you see something that you think might be a story, or something you have a question about, give us a call, or drop us a line.

If you know of a person or an organization doing important work, something that might make a good feature story, we are looking for people to feature each week.

We want to know if someone in your family or your community published a book, became an Eagle Scout, raised money for a good cause, accomplished some feat like running a marathon or having art included in an art show.

We publish photos and notes of a variety of personal milestones and community events, including births, engagements, weddings, anniversaries, awards and obituaries.

We are also interested in events at your church, mosque, synagogue, community center, pool, school, club, etc. E-mail us a photo and a note about the event. Be sure to include the names of all the people who are in a photo, and say when and where the photo was taken.

We also publish notes about news and events from local businesses. Notes about openings, new employees, anniversaries are welcome.

It is especially important to us to let people know about events ahead of time in our calendar of events. We appreciate getting notice at least two weeks ahead of the event, and we encourage photos. Events for our calendars should be free or at nominal cost and open to the public.

In covering the issues, we strive to provide a voice for our readers. We look forward to hearing from you.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Get Involved

The first day of the 2010 General Assembly session is Wednesday, Jan. 13.

The House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees will conduct a Regional Public Hearing on Friday, Jan. 8, at 10 a.m., at the Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus. The hearing will focus on the Governor's proposed 2010-12 Biennial State Budget and is open to the public.

Fairfax County's delegation to the General Assembly will hold a pre-session public hearing on Saturday, Jan. 9, at 9 a.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center. Sign up to speak by calling the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors at 703-324-3151.

Contact Us

To contact the Fairfax Station/Laurel Hill Connection, e-mail south@connectionnewspapers.com or contact Editor Michael O'Connell at moconnell@connectionnewspapers.com, or call 703-778-9416.

Important Story

To the Editor:

Just wanted to thank the Connection reporter for the article "Examining Boundaries" [Connection, Dec. 10-16, 2009] as it was the most-informative article yet on the issue of overcrowding and possible school closing. More and more people are becoming interested in this topic.

This issue is so important to this area because we are running out of space to build new schools and closing a school will affect future overcrowding as well. Unfortunately, the current Southwestern Regional Planning Study is only looking at a short period of time versus any long-term impact to the county of closing schools. As we all know, many of the new schools are already overcrowded by the time they are built (Ex. Eagle View).

Connie Milliken
E-mail Submission

Disagrees with Smoking Ban

To the Editor:

I think Virginia was wrong to ban smoking in restaurants. While

I, as a non-smoker, would choose to not frequent a restaurant that permitted smoking, it is not the role of government to tell a business owner what he may or may not do with his own capital.

The owner of a restaurant should be free to establish his own rules regarding smoking. Customers are free to choose whether to dine at a smoker's restaurant or not and workers are free to choose to offer their services (or not) to a restaurant that permits smoking. No one is "forced" to do anything against their will.

If no one comes to eat or no one wants to work at a smoker's restaurant the owner is then free to change his rules.

Also, if we are going to live with the current law, there is nothing "unfair" in allowing "rich" restaurant owners to build and maintain a separate "smoker's environment." America does not guarantee an equal outcome to everyone. If a smart business owner, through efficient use of his resources, creates enough profit to build the separate smoker's room and that is attractive to his customers and employees, good for him!

Ben Glass
Fairfax Station

'Words Mean Nothing'

To the Editor

Fairfax County Public Schools face yet again another budget shortfall. With the 2009-10 school year nearing the halfway point, county leaders are already preaching gloom and doom for next year. As an educator in Fairfax County, this concerns me. Most teachers can barely afford to live in the communities that we teach in; another year without a step increase or COLA adjustment will drive more and more of us out of the district. Having been born and raised in Western Pennsylvania, how this county cannot come up with sufficient funds to meet the needs of its students is beyond my understanding. Unemployment stands at 4.8 percent in the county; the average family income is \$122,000/year; 59 percent of county residents hold at least a bachelor's degree. Let us compare this with Allegheny County, whose population is about the same as Fairfax County. Unemployment stands at 7.3 percent; average family income is \$46,402; only 28 percent of county residents hold a bachelor's degree. It is considered a disgrace to the district if a teacher cannot afford to live where

they teach — in Fairfax County, it is assumed that they will not live within.

Unlike Fairfax County, schools in Pennsylvania are sustained by the local community; any budget shortfall must be made up by the residents who live within the school district (whether they have children in the schools or not). Education is seen as something of extreme importance — it's a way out of the factories that our parents and grandparents have labored in all of their lives. It is the reason that I did not follow the path of my father — I do not have to stand at the same machine like he has for the past 37 years. My father worked Saturdays and holidays so that I could receive a college education and an out from the mindless daily toil that he has faced. I can never thank him enough. While residents may complain about the costs, they step up and fund their schools. My 85-year-old grandmother, whose only income comes from Social Security somehow comes up with nearly \$5,000 every year to pay her school taxes. How can a county where 59 percent of its residents have achieved academic excellence not put every penny they have back into education?

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 5

THE CONNECTION

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 4

The parents of Fairfax County want their children to receive a Cadillac education but are only willing to pay for a Pinto.

Homeowners in Fairfax County have serious decisions to make about where their priorities are. When times were good and their house values were overinflated, no one was complaining. Instead they were flipping houses in a mad dash to make a few extra dollars, while at the same time laying the foundation for the market collapse. Now that reality has set back in, residents simply want to use the drop in the value of their home as an excuse for not having to pay higher taxes. Candidates running for office all seem to think they can offer a tax reduction — how is that possible? Do people actually believe that this shortfall can be closed with a tax cut? We cannot have it both ways. The county cannot continue to educate children at a high level without the funds needed to do so. Further, as teachers get priced out of living in the area, they will move to communities where they are respected and taken care of. Parents want excellent teachers — raise their salaries and you will get them. I have four college degrees. I could be making much more in the private sector; however, the future of this nation and its youth is much more important to me than the greed that comes with an inflated income. I simply want to be able to live in the community that I teach in. The nation elected a president who talked about change and commitment to community. Fairfax County voted for this “change.” It is time to step up and act. As Ernest Gains wrote “Words mean nothing. Action is the only thing. Doing. That’s the only thing.”

Thomas Demharter
Fairfax

MILITARY NOTES

Paul N. Stratton graduated from the Army ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) Leader Development and Assessment Course, also known as “Operation Warrior Forge,” at Fort Lewis,

Tacoma, Wash. The cadet is a student at Texas State University at San Marcos. Stratton is the son of Yong C. and Anthony W. Stratton of S. Valley Drive, Fairfax Station.

How would you like state of the art LASER dentistry without drills or needles?

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Additionally, using the Waterlase® for gum procedures reduces bleeding, post-operative pain, swelling and the need for pain medication in many cases. That means a new level of comfort and satisfaction for your entire family.

■ Sterilization

The laser sterilizes the tooth as it removes decay. This is very important. Because of bacterial contamination, many of you have had old fillings replaced with either new fillings, or in many cases, with crowns--and sometimes even root canals!! The reoccurrence of decay under fillings is a primary reason so many root canals are needed. Since this new laser sterilizes the tooth as it removes decay, and since many dentists now use ‘bonded’ filling materials enriched with fluoride, the chances of ever having recurrent decay under that new filling are much lower.

■ Great for Teenagers

The Waterlase® is especially great for teenagers. Sure, if the dentist is very good, shots should not really be painful. But **KNOWING** you’re getting a shot is psychologically painful even if you can’t feel the needle--especially for teenagers. By not getting a shot, not feeling the vibration of the drill, and by not hearing the loud drill, kids never become **afraid of the dentist**, so they don’t grow up to be adults afraid of the dentist.

By incorporating laser technology into our dental practice, we are changing dentistry. It is no longer yesterday’s world of painful shots, large silver mercury fillings, and fearful patients. Lasers have improved the lives of patients and their dentists.

Technology is something that makes life better. Better in this case is better clinical results, improved patient comfort, less use of anesthesia and antibiotics.

We are proud to be one of the first dentists in Fairfax County to offer this revolutionary technology. Since August 2003, Dr. Fox has completed over 3,000 laser fillings with no needle/no pain/no numbness. If you’ve been putting off going to the dentist because you were nervous about the drill and needle, you don’t have to put it off any longer!

For more information about our dental practice please visit our website at www.larryfoxdds.com



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Don't live without teeth another day, stop putting up with that old set of teeth that spends more time in your pocket than in your mouth. Get the confidence and youthfulness back that comes with a beautiful smile.

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NEWS

Hotel Clerk Robbed

Police are investigating the robbery of a hotel clerk in the Lorton area that took place Tuesday, Dec. 29.

According to police, a man entered the lobby of the Comfort Inn located at 8180 Silverbrook Road around 10:30 p.m., produced a gun and demanded cash from the clerk. Police spokesman Lucy Caldwell said that an undisclosed amount of cash was taken and the suspect fled the premises on foot. There were no injuries.

The suspect was described as black and in his 20s. He wore a green camouflage jacket, jeans and a black mask. He was around 5 feet 5 inches tall and weighed 140 pounds.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org or text "TIP187" plus your message to CRIMES/274637 or call Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.

FAITH NOTES

Movie Screening: Food, Inc. 7:30 p.m. at Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke. Free movie with Doug McCusker, author of Ethical Eating. Vegetarian potluck at 6:45 p.m., film starts at 7:30 pm. Reservations recommended. 703-503-4579 or administrator@accotinkuuc.org.

New Beginnings Divorce Care: a 13-week program with a Christian approach to divorce and separation. Beginning Saturday, Jan. 9 at Truro Church, 10520 Main St., Fairfax. The course runs continually and can be joined at any time. Free. Contact Don Emery at 703-815-6762 or donemry@aol.com.

Seniors are invited to the Lunch N' Life sponsored by the Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke on Thursday,

Jan. 21, from 12- 2 p.m., at Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. The program will be presented by Phyllis Verhalen performing as Abigail Adams in period costume. Seating is limited. For reservations, call Faye Quesenberry 703-620-0161 by Jan. 14. \$8; checks payable to SCFB. If transportation is needed, call the SCFB office 703-323-4788. See www.fairfax-burkesc.org.

United Methodist Men Breakfast is on Saturday Jan. 23, at 8 a.m., at Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria. The men of Franconia UMM (United Methodist Men) will begin another year in ministry to the men of the congregation with their annual kickoff breakfast to plan out the entire year of 2010. All men are welcome. 703-971-5151 or www.franconiaumc.org.

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BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

AGES SIX-ELEVEN YEARS

GRADES 1-6

Transportation provided to Terra Centre, Fairview, White Oaks, and Cherry Run Elementary Schools. Emphasis on special events, sports, time for homework, and student's choice of activities.

KINDERGARTEN

Registrations are now being accepted for the 2009-2010 School Year. Two Virginia certified teachers per classroom. Program emphasizes language arts, math, computer literacy, science, social studies, social development, art, music and physical development.

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Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Business Breakfast

FROM PAGE 3

ket-based solution is needed for job growth and economic recovery instead of government involvement. Hunt said that government stimulus packages only result in tax increases and budget deficits and that the government should try to curb spending by examining programs and services to see which ones are effective and cutting the ones that are not. Keeping the budget in check, Hunt said, would do the job of maintaining a positive environment for small business growth, which he believes is the key element of the economy.

"I'm not going to Richmond to create jobs, because that is creating governmental jobs," Hunt said. "I'm going to Richmond to create an environment where you, the people, create jobs. My role is to represent the community to the government, not to justify the government's actions to the community."

WHILE THE economy was the focal point of the breakfast, the candidates also addressed tort reform, and by proxy, healthcare, as well. Marsden praised the state's actions in regards to tort reform, noting that Virginia has a \$2 million cap on malpractice law-

suits. The cap, he said, along with the Birth Injury Program, which pays out money that doctors contribute in the event of an injury during the birthing process, help to keep health care costs relatively low. Hunt, in turn, said that while the cap places a limit on lawsuit payouts, it still does not alleviate doctor's and insurance companies' fears of lawsuits and therefore, does not help to keep healthcare premiums in check.

Special Election

The 37th State Senate District is comprised of parts of the Sully, Springfield and Braddock Districts. All registered residents of this district can vote in the special election on Tuesday, Jan. 12 from 6 a.m.-7 p.m. at their normal polling places.

Time restrictions limited the candidates to a 10-minute speech and two questions to answer, but for those in attendance, it was more than enough time to cover the issues that mattered most to them. Though most would not divulge their favored candidate, they acknowledged that the issues discussed were the ones that would sway their vote and that they got a good idea of which would be their best ally in office.

"Regulation, taxes and health care. Those are the important issues," said John Faith. "Those are the areas that will allow us to either do business or tie our hands. It's hard to separate those issues when small business is your livelihood, and I'm looking [to vote] for the person who is going to stand up for the small business owner."



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CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

THURSDAY/JAN. 7

Bear Tales Story Time. 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Story time. Ages 13-23 months with adult. 703-249-1520.

Daytime Book Discussion Group. 12:15 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. "Dewey: The Small-Town Library Cat Who Touched the World" by Vicki Myron. Adults. 703-339-4610.

FRIDAY/JAN. 8

Fairfax High School Choral Department Cabaret Night. 7 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Classic jazz and Broadway songs. Tickets cover admission, dessert and a beverage. \$10 adults, \$5 seniors, students or children over two. \$25 for a family of four. Gift basket raffle available. www.fhschorus.net.

Lunch Bunch. 12 p.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Bring lunch and listen to stories. Birth-5 with adult. 703-971-0010.

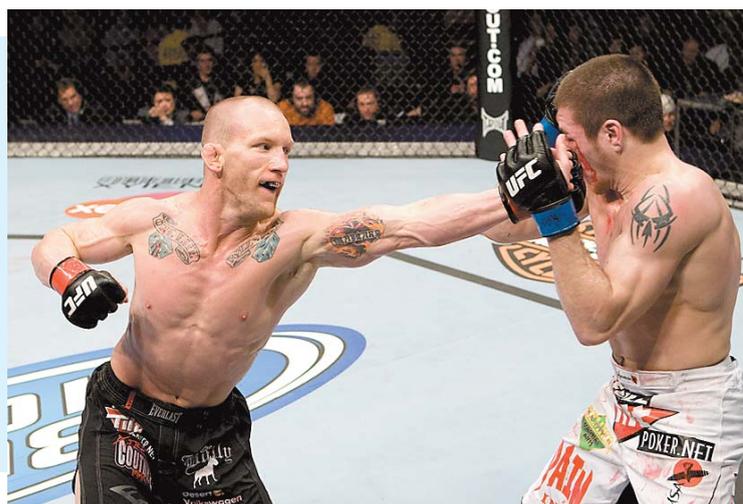
SATURDAY/JAN. 9

Animals in Winter. 10:30 a.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Join a naturalist from Hidden Pond Nature Center to learn about the animals in your neighborhood. Presentation includes live animals. 703-971-0010.

Friends of the Library Book Sale.

UFC Bout at GMU

Gray Maynard, left, fights Nate Diaz on Monday, Jan. 11, in a Ultimate Fighting Championship bout at the George Mason University Patriot Center.



COURTESY OF UFC

10 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Gems and finds for all readers. All ages. 703-339-4610.

Birding for Beginners class. 8-10:30 a.m. at Huntley Meadows Visitor Center, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria. Start with a discussion about field guides and optics. A walk will follow to look for and identify resident birds. Adults. \$6. Reservations required at 703-768-2525.

Second Saturday Art Walk. The Workhouse Studio Artists will keep their doors open after hours, from 6-9 p.m., 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The Association of Interior Design Professionals (AIDP) will host a reception in conjunction with the Art Walks in W-16 from 6-7 p.m. to bring together artists, interior design professionals and the public to highlight the creative incorporation

of original art into interior design settings. For more information, call 703-495-0001 or visit www.workhousearts.org.

SUNDAY/JAN. 10

Le Hotclub de Biglick. 5:30 p.m., at the Lorton Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. In the 1930s, a style of music known as gypsy jazz was made famous by the legendary Django Reinhardt. Now today, this music is kept alive by a group known as Le Hotclub de Biglick. For more information visit www.lehotclub.com. Tickets \$15-\$25 and can be purchased at www.workhousearts.org.

MONDAY/JAN. 11

Ultimate Fighting Championship, with Gray Maynard and Nate

Diaz. 6:15 p.m. at George Mason University Patriot Center, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$43-\$203, at www.ticketmaster.com or at 703-573-SEAT. www.patriotcenter.com.

PAL Reading Visits. 4-5:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Read aloud to a trained therapy dog. Call to reserve a 15-minute slot. 703-249-1520.

Early Reader Book Discussion. 3:30 p.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Early reader book activities. Call for titles. Age 6-8 with adult. 703-971-0010.

Happy Birthday Princess Priscilla. 10:30 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Celebrate the birthday of our branch teddy bear, Princess Priscilla, with stories and songs. Age 24 months to 5 with adult. 703-339-4610.

How Do The Critters Survive in The Cold? From 10-11 a.m., bring naturalists 3-6-years old to Hidden Pond Nature Center to learn how wildlife copes in harsh weather. Through an inside talk and outdoor exploration, the youngsters will see how nature finds a way to survive adverse conditions. They will find out what the creatures did during the snowstorm and understand how they make it through a long, cold winter. \$4 per child. Call 703-451-9588 to make a reservation.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 13

Nonfiction Book Discussion Group. 6-7:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Call for title. Adults. 703-249-1520.

One-on-One Genealogical Research Assistance. 7 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Get started on genealogical research with the assistance of our experienced volunteers. Adults. 703-249-1520.

Older Adults Book Group. 2 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. "A Thousand Splendid Suns" by Khaled Hosseini. Meet next door at Kingstowne Center for Active Adults (KNCAA.) 703-339-4610.

Practice Your English. 6:30 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Conversation group for adults learning English. 703-339-4610.

Springfield/Alexandria Women's Connection Christmas Luncheon. 11:30 a.m. at Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. \$17, includes luncheon and free childcare. Reserve at 703-569-4670 or 703-590-6562.



Request for Public Comment

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority is seeking public comment on proposed enhancements to the existing 7-mile long Mountain Bike Trail at Fountainhead Regional Park in Fairfax Station, Virginia. The project will rehabilitate 3.5 miles of existing trail, close one mile of unsustainable trail, and build 4 miles of new trail using International Mountain Bicycling Association sustainable trail building standards. Please visit our website at www.nvrpa.org or contact (703)352-5900 for more information. Written comments must be received by 5pm February 3, 2010 at NVRPA, 5400 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, VA 22039 or by email at plandev@nvrpa.org

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COMMUNITY

Hunt, Marsden in 37th

FROM PAGE 2

MARSDEN considers himself a political centrist who said he could appeal to moderate Republicans and independent voters.

As a Democrat in the House of Delegates, he voted to eliminate the estate tax, which he saw as barrier for people who want to pass on small family businesses and farms to their children to run.

In the midst of this economic downturn, Marsden has also said he would be very reluctant to raise taxes. Instead, he thinks the General Assembly should focus on providing incentives to the business community, which would create new jobs and ultimately improve Virginia's economy.

Even when Virginia is short on state funds, Marsden is in favor of preserving the "Governor's opportunity fund," which provides financial help to businesses willing to bring new jobs to Virginia. Unlike many other Democrats in the State Senate, Marsden is opposed to raising the gasoline tax to help fund transportation, he said.

"We are going to using less and less gasoline. It is not the world's greatest source for transportation funding," said Marsden.

The Democrat's re-election this past November also proved that he is appealing to some Republican voters in the 37th State Senate seat. As a state delegate, Marsden currently represents just about 28 percent of Cuccinelli's district already.

During the 2009 election, Marsden won re-election

by a slim margin of just 1 percent. But McDonnell won Marsden's seat by 10 percentage points on the same day, indicating the several hundred voters who favored McDonnell also decided to vote for Marsden.

But several Republicans said Hunt is a far better choice than Marsden for people who are interested in keeping taxes low.

Hunt has signed a "no new taxes" pledge, a commitment that Marsden has not made. Other Republicans point out that Marsden has voted to raise taxes and fees several times over the last four years as a member of the House of Delegates.

For example, Marsden voted in favor of the 2007 transportation-funding package, which allowed local governments to implement an array of new taxes, including those on commercial real estate and vehicle repairs.

"I am hearing that people want government to stop intruding in their lives," said Hunt. "They want government to stop trying to do things for them and to let them do things for themselves."

If elected, the Republican said his priorities for the state budget would lean toward "core services" like public safety and transportation, which only the government can provide.

Hunt also considers education to be a core service of the government, though he said a lot more could be done to spend public education dollars more effectively.

SEE SENATE RACE, PAGE 12

Nothing is often a good thing to say, and always a clever thing to say.

—Will Durant

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Stories To Watch For in 2010

With 2009 over-and-done, here's a preview of a few of 2010's top high school sports stories.

BY REED S. ALBERS
THE CONNECTION

End of Basketball Season Nears

With the holiday tournaments over and just about every local high school basketball team about to enter the bulk of its district play, the basketball scene is primed to heat up the frigid month of January.

Here's a quick check-in with some of the local boys' and girls' teams for those just tuning into the basketball action.

In South County's five-year history, the boys' basketball team has never recorded a winning record, but in 2009-10, the Stallions are poised to add a winning season to the history book.

With a 6-3 record and key victories against Westfield and Robinson, the Stallions are on the verge of their best season in school history.

The good fortune isn't only with the boys' team, but the girls' team is also off to a strong start. The Lady Stallions have a 5-3 record, but are looking to rebound from two consecutive losses during the holiday tournament season.

The Woodson girls' team comes out of the holiday break with a 6-2 record, recording major wins over Fairfax and McLean. Led by senior Melissa Gallo, the Lady Cavs already have a 2-0 record against Patriot District opponents.

The Woodson boys' team has a 5-4 record after the break and has a 1-1 record in the Patriot District to start 2010.

After earning back-to-back victory against

Fairfax and West Springfield in mid-December, the Robinson boys' basketball team is slumping. Since their Dec. 15 victory over West Springfield, the Rams have dropped five-in-a-row, but are looking to rebound against Chantilly on Dec. 8.

The Lady Rams currently have a 6-2 record and will have a chance to put some distance between themselves and the rest of the Concorde District when district play picks up in January.

A rocky four-game losing streak started the Lake Braddock boys' basketball season, but a string of four wins helped turn the start into a 4-4 record to end December. With a 0-1 record in district play, the boys' will look to January to make up lost ground on South County and T.C. Williams. The girls' team is currently 1-6 and starts its January play against West Springfield.

Baseball and Softball

With the winter sports season nearing the midway point, it's not too soon to be thinking about spring training and the upcoming baseball season.

Local teams will be looking to build upon the success they shared in 2009, starting with Lake Braddock and their 17-7 season. The Bruins advanced to the state playoffs but were defeated by Hanover 0-4.

South County finished the 2009 season a strong 17-7 record and the girls' softball team dominated their competition en route to a 23-1 season. The Lady Stallions reached the state semi-finals but were defeated by Westfield 2-0.

Patriot District newcomer W.T. Woodson will be partaking in their first baseball and softball seasons in the Patriot District in 2010. The baseball team went 11-13 in



FILE PHOTOS

The South County boys' basketball season hasn't had a winning season in the school's five-year history, but a 6-3 start suggests that the team might be on the verge of breaking its losing spell.

2009 and had their season ended by Westfield in the Northern Region playoffs.

Area teams will also be looking to battle for home-field advantage in the state playoffs.

Westfield will be hosting the VHSL State Baseball Finals in 2010 and if local teams can garner top seeds, they'll enjoy playing in the comfy confines of Fairfax County instead of journeying around the state in late May and early June.

Soccer Fever in Area

Anyone hankering for some soccer before the FIFA World Cup in South Africa arrives in mid-June should check out the local high school soccer scene.

A good starting place for those craving the beautiful game might be Robinson Secondary School, home of the 2009 Northern Region Boys' Soccer Champions.

In addition to capturing the Northern Region title and the Concorde District title, the boys' team also shutout 10 opponents in the 2009 season.

With a season as successful and dominating as 2009, it's only natural that the Rams will have to contend with the ire of the Northern Region and play with a target on their backs.

South County's soccer teams are looking to be one of those teams chasing a Northern Region title.

In 2009, the Stallion boys finished with a 13-2-1 record and the girls ended the year with a 10-4-2 record.

Other local soccer teams of note include the Woodson girls' team who finished 2009 with a 13-1-2 record and the Lake Braddock girls' team who recorded a 9-7 record in 2009.

One Down, Four To Go for Bruins

Lake Braddock's cross-country team almost had its name erased from the Virginia High School League record book. That was until

SEE 2010, PAGE 14



Patriot District rivals Lake Braddock and Woodson faced off in the Division 6 Northern Region football finals in 2009. In 2010, the Patriot District should be one of the most competitive districts in the region.

CAMPS & SCHOOLS

Meilen B. Campana, a resident of Lorton, recently earned a bachelor of science in business from Excelsior College.

Diana Davis, of Clifton, is among the 107 Marymount University undergraduate students who have been selected as national outstanding campus leaders and are included in the 2009 edition of Who's Who among Students in American Universities and Colleges. Davis is majoring in theology and in the Honors Program.

Maureen Commins of Fairfax Station, a junior at Gettysburg College, spent the fall 2009 semester studying in Ireland.

The Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, National Leadership Trainers Halstead Inc. and Sylvan Learning Center, McLean have created leadership/fitness training program for students in grades seven through 12. The training will incorporate vigorous fitness exercise with the nationally accepted Rising Star leadership program. The program is not directed to any one group or sex.

Proper nutrition, weight training techniques, cardio techniques and body motion will be taught by the JCCNV-certified personal trainers. The students will have complete access to all the facilities at the JCCNV including the pool, basketball gym, and weight/fitness room.

The Rising Star leadership program teaches leadership skills, goal setting and successful achievement of those goals, time management, study habits and many more skills teens today need to succeed later in life. The training is 12



COURTESY OF SYDNEY SAWYER

Holiday Music

Festive musicians and music filled the halls during the Strolling Winter Concert at Clifton Elementary School. Here, saxophone players Evan Goldsmith and Carly Feldenkris spread the holiday spirit.

phone players Evan Goldsmith and Carly Feldenkris spread the holiday spirit.

weeks long with one session in the morning before school and one in the evening after school. Constant parent/instructor contact is available and encouraged. Each student will receive a free one-year membership to the JCCNV so they will continue to have access to the facilities and instructors. The JCCNV is at 8900 Little River Turnpike in Fairfax. Contact Curtis Doss, Sports Development Coordinator, at 703-537-3028 or curtisd@jccnv.org.

Christina Wallin of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, who plans to study computer science in college, has received a National Merit-The MITRE Corporation Scholarship, a corporate-sponsored scholarship from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Corporate-sponsored merit scholarship awards are renewable for up to four years of college undergraduate study and range from \$500 to \$10,000 per year.

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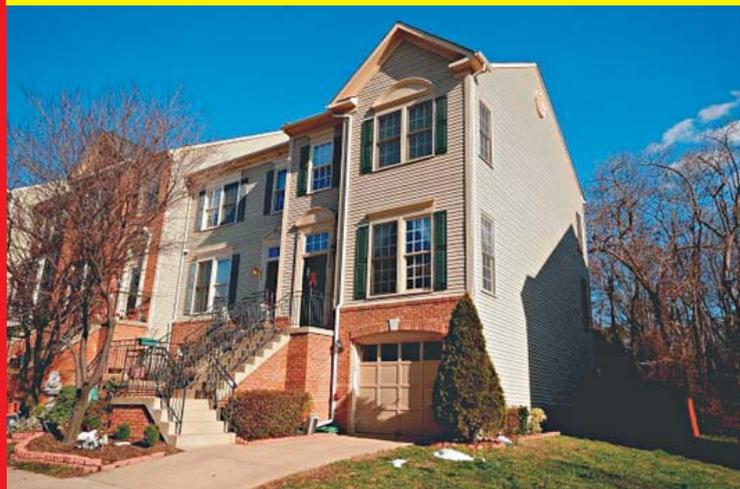
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Senate Race

FROM PAGE 9

"We have to make sure more education money is getting into the classroom. You don't get a more effective education system by just continually throwing money at it," said Hunt, who added that he has first-hand knowledge of Fairfax County Public Schools' wasteful spending as a former School Board member.

Hunt is also in favor of promoting charter school alternatives, an initiative McDonnell and Obama have also publicly supported.

"I think there needs to be an alternative in the way we present public education, and I think charter schools are good options, especially in areas where the regular school system is struggling," said Hunt.

Hunt's other proposals for education reform include more "pay-for-performance" measures for public school teachers and principals. Specifically, Hunt would like to create a bonus or incentive pay system for elementary school principals whose former students excel academically in middle school.

"If students from an elementary school are performing particularly well in middle school, a principal should be awarded for that," said Hunt.

Hunt is considered a conservative when it comes to social issues.

The Republican has worked as an abstinence counselor for high school students, asking them to wait until after marriage to have sex. As a School Board member, he advocated to have some references to contraception and birth control removed from a sexuality pamphlet distributed to Fairfax County students.

While on the Fairfax County School Board, Hunt also pushed for speakers who described themselves as former homosexuals to come speak to local high school students.

The Republican is pro-life and would likely favor most legislation that restricted access to abortion in Virginia.

Hunt also said he would support bills that allowed people to carry concealed guns into Virginia bars and restaurants, as long as they refrained from drinking alcohol. Currently, restaurant and bar patrons are required to wear a weapon "exposed" when they enter a bar or restaurant so that other patrons and the establishment's staff can see that they are armed.

"We need to stop treating law-abiding citizens as if they were guilty first. We should treat people who have not broken the law as people who have not broken the law," said Hunt about the concealed weapon issue.

Republicans insist that social issues are not a priority for voters in turbulent economic times like these. "The issues that matter right now in Northern Virginia are the budget and taxes and how we are going to deal with funding transportation and education...I don't know any survey of top issues that includes the divisive social stuff Dave Marsden seems to want to focus on," said Herrity.

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SPORTS

2010: Year Ahead

FROM PAGE 10

the Bruins stopped Midlothian from capturing their fifth straight state title at the 2009 state cross-country finals.

Although standout distance runner Liana Epstein will be graduating, the Bruins have found a new spark in a talented youngster. Freshman runner Sophie Chase finished second at the state finals and had another strong performance in the Northern Region finals.

With a VHSL record currently being shared by Lake Braddock and Midlothian, 2010 might be the start of Lake Braddock's attempt to re-claim the consecutive state titles mark for their own.



The Robinson boys' soccer team won the Northern Region championship in 2009. The Rams will be one of the top teams to watch this spring.

The Patriot District also featured one of the best quarterback rivalries in the area between Lake Braddock's Michael Nebrich and Woodson's Connor Reilly.

Patriot District Football

When it comes to ultra-competitive divisions, the NCAA has the Southeastern Conference, the NFL has the NFC East and the Northern Region has the Patriot District.

In the 2009 season, the historically strong Concorde District gave way to a new set of stars in the Patriot District.

Patriot District rivals Lake Braddock and Woodson squared off in the Northern Region finals and just a week before that, it was three Patriot District teams in the semi-finals — South County, Woodson and Lake Braddock.

Further cementing the power-swap, two of the Concorde District's playoff teams, Oakton and Westfield, exited the playoffs in the first round courtesy of Patriot District opponents.

While the Patriot District reigned supreme in 2009, the district is seeing some of its brightest stars leave at the end of the 2010 school year.

Regardless of what lies in store for the district in 2010, there's no doubt that 2009 brought out some of the best storylines in local area football and will be a must-watch district in 2010.

21 Announcements

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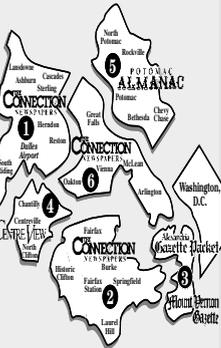
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HEALTH NOTES

Haven of Northern Virginia, 4606 Ravensworth Road, Annandale, will be offering a free Widow/Widower's support group. Haven also offers one-on-one support. A volunteer will meet with a person grieving the death of a loved one, as needed, to provide individual support. Volunteers will be selected to match individual need. 703-941-7000, www.havenofnova.org.

Life with Cancer has a variety of support programs for cancer patients and their families at the Cancer Family Center, 2700 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax. 703-776-2841 or www.lifewithcancer.org.

The Clifton Presbyterian Church has a Caregiver Support Group that meets the second and fourth Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the church, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton. This group is for caregivers of seniors with Alzheimer's, dementia, and other age-related problems. 703-830-9175 ext. 17.

Registration for weekday and weekend

Lamaze childbirth classes in Springfield is available at www.lamaze-dc.com or by calling 703-549-2226.

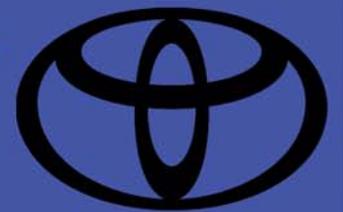
Alzheimer's Family Day Center, located at 2812 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax, hosts various classes. Reservations are required, and classes are open to people who are caring for a relative or friend with dementia. 703-204-4664 or www.alzheimersfdc.org/classes.htm.

TLC: Teens Living with Cancer. Monthly social activities for 13 to 18-year-olds who have cancer give them a chance to meet others with cancer, share a little, and have fun. Call 703-208-5623 for details. At the Life with Cancer Family Center, 2832 Juniper St., Fairfax. 703-698-2841 or www.lifewithcancer.org.

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