

CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

Schedule of March movies released for Packard Campus Theater
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UVA Health answers common questions about going to the local hospital
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Tuesday, March 3, 2026

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Growth driving county budget

County faces \$7.2M shortfall; tax hikes loom to real estate, personal property

ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION
Culpeper Star-Exponent

The board of supervisors continues to take a hard look at spending and expenses as part of annual budget talks for fiscal year 2026-2027,

even as local tax hikes loom to cover an expected shortfall.

Growth dominated budget requests from various department heads and outside agencies during meetings last month while

Culpeper County elected officials heard of an anticipated budget shortfall due to new debt recently taken on for major school projects.

Associated impacts to the real estate tax rate remain top of mind as officials wait for promised data center tax revenues to roll in.

For FY26-27, the county faces a \$7.2 million shortfall, according to a county administrator report

going to the Board of Supervisors at a work session today, following their regular monthly meeting.

A recommendation includes increasing the real estate tax rate by 2 cents to 45 cents per \$100 of assessed value and increasing the personal property tax rate from \$3 to \$3.50.

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REGION GETS BIG CHECKS



CULPEPER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Rep. Eugene Vindman, D-7th, (center) meets with county and school officials Friday at the Culpeper Police Department.

Rep. Vindman in area doling out over \$6m for eight community projects

ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION
Culpeper Star-Exponent

Rep. Eugene Vindman, D-7th, was in the western part of the district last week, presenting big checks for community projects — more than \$6.34 million for eight initiatives related to public education, clean water and law enforcement.

On Thursday, the local Congressman visited Orange and Greene counties to celebrate investments in community-requested projects. Vindman worked directly with local officials to solicit these requests, advance the projects, and advocate for final appropriations.

Orange County Public Schools received \$850,000 to improve student safety and quality of life at Gordon-Barbour Elementary School in the Town of Gordonsville. The funding will add 3,500 square feet to the cafeteria and enclose walkways connecting two annexes.

In Orange, Vindman highlighted \$800,000 to modernize the town's water treatment process through the construction of a liquid feed building. The upgrade will reduce reliance on scarce dry chemicals, improve treatment reliability, and bring the town's system in line with neighboring localities, following recent investments to replace century-old infrastructure, according to a release from the congressman's office.

Also on Thursday, the congressman was in Stanardsville celebrating \$1.092 million to address longstanding water infrastructure deficiencies in Greene County and the town. The funds will upgrade undersized water mains that limit water pressure and service reliability. The improvements will strengthen water service to government facilities, schools, and residents, enhance public safety, reduce shortages, and support

Please see CHECKS, Page A4

Four U.S. soldiers die in war with Iran

Six American pilots safely ejected in friendly fire incident with Kuwait

BY FOSTER KLUG AND ANGELA CHARLTON
Associated Press

The war in the Middle East expanded on multiple fronts Monday as attacks from Iran and Iranian-backed militias struck Israel and Arab states as well as U.S. military targets in the region.

The U.S. military said Kuwait "mistakenly shot down" three American fighter aircraft during a combat mission, though all six pilots ejected safely and were in stable condition.

Israel and the United States continued to strike Iran while Israeli forces responded to attacks from the Iranian-backed Hezbollah militant group by hitting targets in southern Lebanon where at least 31 were killed and 149 injured.

The war began on Saturday with the killing of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a joint U.S.-Israeli strike that reverberated around the globe. Reaction to Khamenei's death ranged from jubilation to condemnation, while the escalating conflict has caused canceled flights, deadly protests, suspended shipping and soaring oil prices.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society on Monday said that attacks on 131 cities have killed at least 555 people so far in the Islamic Republic. Strikes in Tehran apparently took Iran's state television off the air.

The joint U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran stoked fears of a wider war and damage to the world economy. Meanwhile, Iran has expanded its attacks to regional oil infrastructure, directly targeting the lifeblood of the region's economy.

Citing the war and attacks on its facilities in Qatar, state-owned firm QatarEnergy said it would stop its production of liquefied natural gas, taking one of the world's top suppliers off the market.

Three U.S. service members were killed in the Saturday attack on Iran, while another died on Monday from injuries sustained during the initial operation, according to U.S. Central Command.

U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth told a news conference at the Pentagon on Monday that the U.S.-Israeli campaign was the "most precise aerial operation in history," and decried Tehran's "expansionist and Islamist regime."

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Dike Eleonu and Makayla Nevin are in this week's Academic Spotlight PAGE A3

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