

CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

Kings Dominion in Doswell opening weekends to start season of amusements

STATE, A5



Blue Ridge Mountains inspire design for new Culpeper Police vehicle fleet

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Saturday, March 14, 2026

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Youth protest to get ICE out of town

Council reasserts “Constitutional Town” status, reups 2020 resolution

ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION
Culpeper Star-Exponent

Local teens assembled Tuesday evening to protest ICE involvement in Culpeper, marching down Main Street carrying signs to the town

council meeting to make their voices heard on a divisive national issue.

“I am a 17-year-old. I should not have to sit here advocating for an entire community because you won’t. They are targeting people of color,” said the protest organizer, a young woman from Reva, at the town council meeting held in the county administration building broadcast on Culpeper Media Network.

“I am not here to tell you to

not support our (local) law enforcement. Our law enforcement was here to support us... Deputy Chief White was here...I support our police force, I don’t support racial profiling of people of color that’s been going on. I do not support them in Culpeper. I know our community and it should feel safe here. I have lived here my entire life and I no longer feel safe or for my neighbors here,” the protest organizer said.

A young man spoke, saying he comes from a family of immigrants. The town of Culpeper is over 25% Hispanics, according to the U.S. Census.

“My people have lived through fear and I grew up in fear, my siblings are growing up in fear and I need to call this out,” he said.

“They don’t go out because they fear that could be taken away and I hope you guys will not support ICE

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MARCH MADNESS

A ROUND OF SNOW AND COLLEGE BASKETBALL



BOB DONNAN IMAGES

Duke Blue Devils forward Maliq Brown (6) knocks the ball from Florida State Seminoles guard Robert McCray V. (6) in the second half of the game Thursday night at the Spectrum Center in Charlotte, N.C.

STRATA SOLAR

Planners deny Stevensburg solar project for fourth time

Speakers decry industrial project on forested blackjack land, water runoff impacts

ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION
Culpeper Star-Exponent

Third time was not a charm and neither was the fourth time the county planning commission recommended denial of a request from Strata Solar to build a utility scale solar project in Stevensburg.

The vote was unanimous at Wednesday night’s meeting to deny supporting a conditional use permit for Maroon Solar on agriculturally-zoned forest tracts in between Mount Pony and Racoon Ford roads. The community also continued to speak out in force against it.

The denial from county planners was definitive even after the large, N.C.-based solar developer more than cut the project in half from 2023—proposing to fence in 291 acres and place on it numerous 14-foot-tall solar panels, a substation and associated infrastructure.

The rest of the site, bisected by Sumerduck Run, would be left in open space, developers told the planning commission along with people who came to speak at the public hearing, most in opposition.

Controlling water runoff on the site, known for its shrink-and-swell blackjack soil, emerged among top concerns with neighbors as well as agricultural land being turned into an industrial site. Other spoke of a rare ecosystem of plants existing on the site, a so-called “Piedmont Prairie.”

The county’s comprehensive plan directs utility scale solar to be placed on industrial zoned land and should not significantly impact or alter existing rural surroundings, a point that kept coming up Wednesday.

Solar officials argued for property rights and stated the project would be located in the center of the larger 1,400-acre site and not seen from the road with extensive natural buffer kept in place and 212 acres dedicated to stormwater control.

Strata: more power is needed

Maroon Solar development manager Frank Hopkins stressed the need to create more energy in Virginia as demand is projected to double by 2035. He told the planning commission the project would generate nearly \$7.5 million over its 35-year lifetime in county revenues, while addressing the energy crisis.

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Daffodils that bloomed this week with warm weather struggle to stand Thursday following a round of March snow.

ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION,
CULPEPER STAR-EXPONENT

80s turn to winter as Maliq Brown pursues excellence with Duke

ALLISON BROPHY CHAMPION
Culpeper Star-Exponent

Temperatures reached into the 80s Wednesday in the Culpeper area followed by snow falling on Thursday, placing a white covering back on farm fields and yards.

Orange County Public Schools cancelled after-school activities as snow rested on sports fields as well. Daffodils wilted in the March cold snap and the rest of the week will be all over the place, weather-wise, in a transitional month trying to hold onto winter as spring emerges and days are longer.

Overnight lows will remain the 20s and 30s for the foreseeable future with some days in the 60s and 70s. Overnight lows will remain in the 20s

In other March Madness news, top-seeded Duke won 80-79 Thursday night in real thriller over Florida State in the ACC

college basketball quarterfinal. Culpeper’s Maliq Brown reeled in eight offensive boards en route to 12 total caroms, matching his career high on the glass, reports goduke.com. The senior newly named ACC Defensive Player of the Year, also posted three assists, three steals and two blocked shots, in the game his mom, Tasha Brown, described as a “nail biter for sure.”

Duke (30-2) advanced to the ACC Tournament semifinals Friday night against No. 5-seed Clemson at the Spectrum Center in Charlotte, N.C. UVA Men’s Basketball also made the semifinals this year as the March madness action continues to play out on the court and in nature in a real thriller over Florida State

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Check out area church briefs on today’s Faith & Values **PAGE A2**

Weather
Mostly sunny; pleasant
High 61 • Low 34
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