

News Roundup

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First off, it's Veterans' Day. Thanks to all who have served -- including Jamie Markham, who regularly contributes to this blog -- and Godspeed to those who are in harm's way today.

In other recent news:

1. Two North Carolina judges have just been nominated to the Fourth Circuit: Jim Wynn, who currently sits on the court of appeals, and Albert Diaz, who is a business court judge in Charlotte. Both, as it happens, have substantial military experience. The News and Observer's story is [here](#).
2. The News and Observer also reported recently on the status of claims made under the [Racial Justice Act](#). The gist of the story is that such claims aren't finding much traction, but you can read all the details [here](#).
3. The United States Supreme Court heard argument this week in the *Graham* and *Sullivan* cases, which concern the constitutionality of life without parole sentences for juveniles who commit non-homicide offenses. There has been an enormous amount of media coverage of these cases. A New York Times article is [here](#), and a collection of other pieces is [here](#). The transcripts of the argument are available here: [Sullivan](#), and [Graham](#).
4. John Allen Muhammad, the "DC sniper," was executed this morning in Virginia. Story [here](#). At *Sentencing Law and Policy*, Doug Berman [opines](#) that cases like Muhammad's are why a majority of Americans support the death penalty in at least some cases. A potentially significant procedural aspect of this case is that the state set an execution date after the federal circuit court affirmed denial of Muhammad's habeas petition, but *before* the Supreme Court would have reviewed his petition for certiorari in the normal course of business. Three Justices were [not too happy](#) about that. (Hat tip: Crime and Consequences.)
5. Speaking of the death penalty, I'm lucky to have Tom Tynan, a smart and conscientious new lawyer, helping me prepare to update the *Capital Case Law Handbook*. (Even with Tom's help, it's going to take a while.) He pointed out [this interesting story](#) about dog sniff lineups. Anyone ever heard of these being used in North Carolina?
6. Finally, I can't resist a few technology-related tidbits. A federal judge recently [ruled](#) that the media could not cover a criminal trial via Twitter. But Senator Arlen Specter (D-PA) wants the United States Supreme Court to [permit television coverage](#) of its proceedings. On a more serious note, [this story](#) reports that some collectors of child pornography are using malware to store their materials on the computers of unwitting victims.

More news in another week or so. Again, thanks to our servicemen and -women on this Veterans' Day.