

News Roundup

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The week saw a bit of musical chairs at the state supreme court. Chief Justice Parker stepped down as a result of mandatory retirement and then-Senior Associate Justice Martin was named Chief Justice. Then-court of appeals judge Bob Hunter was named Associate Justice, replacing now-Chief Justice Martin. That should settle everything . . . until November, at which point we'll have elections for several seats and may see additional changes.

In other news:

Would Michael Brown's robbery be admissible in a homicide case against the officer who shot him? Michael Brown is the young man who was shot and killed in Ferguson, Missouri. It appears that he had recently robbed a convenience store, but that the officer who shot him may not have known that. If the officer is charged with homicide, would evidence about the robbery be admissible? Ken White at Popehat is skeptical in [this](#) post, but former federal judge and current law professor Paul Cassell argues [here](#) that evidence of the robbery likely would be admitted. To me, Cassell seems to have the better of the argument, but obviously opinions may differ.

Lawyers question Rick Perry indictment. Texas Governor Rick Perry was indicted for cutting funding to a prosecutor's office after the prosecutor (a) investigated a program that Perry favored, (b) got arrested for drunk driving and then acted like a jerk, and (c) refused Perry's request to resign. I'm withholding judgment until more details emerge, but my tentative view is that the indictment is an overreach. The *Wall Street Journal* Law Blog rounds up a few opinions on the issue [here](#), from across the political spectrum. Most are critical of the indictment.

Mockingbird news. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is one of the best books ever written about criminal law. Author Harper Lee wrote the book as a young woman and never wrote another, living quietly, perhaps even reclusively, in a small town. There's a new book out about her, called *The Mockingbird Next Door*, written by a woman who lived next door to Harper Lee and her sister Alice for several years. It's a controversial book but I heard an interview with the author, who revealed that Alice Lee was a lawyer who practiced *until she was 100 years old*. So one sister retired very, very young, and the other seemingly didn't ever want to retire.

I pity the fool! Children of the 1980s will enjoy [this story](#) about Mr. T showing up for jury duty in Illinois, still sporting his trademark Mohawk. Apparently his fans "flocked to him in droves."

Huge news in the only sport not on ESPN. Finally, the competitive court reporting national championship took place recently in San Francisco. Mark Kislingbury, a reporter known as "the Michael Jordan of court reporting," was upset by Jo Ann Bryce, who achieved near-perfect accuracy at a dazzling rate of 280 words per minute. Here's hoping she gets her rightful place on a Wheaties box.