

News Roundup

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As [previously noted](#) by the News Roundup, the FBI was able to unlock an iPhone belonging to one of the shooters in the San Bernardino terror attacks without Apple's assistance. Now that the FBI has this capability, local law enforcement agencies and district attorneys' offices anticipate that they will ask the FBI to help access cellphones in investigations of criminal offenses, according to a [report](#) from the Charlotte Observer. The report indicates that about 20 percent of the phones examined by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's cybercrime unit are encrypted and the unit has been unable to access information on the devices. Keep reading for more news.

Private Police Chief Indicted. WRAL [reports](#) that a chief with the Nova Agency Company Police Department has been indicted on numerous charges based on overstepping his authority when making arrests. Among other things, Joseph Conover is alleged to have obstructed justice while acting as a sworn law enforcement officer and to have used a Taser without justification. Private law enforcement agencies such as the one involved in this case often contract to provide security services for places such as apartment complexes and malls. The News and Observer [reports](#) that the Wake County District Attorney's Office is in the process of dismissing pending cases involving charges made by Conover.

Community Praises Fuquay-Varina Police Chief. It seems appropriate to follow a story of a private police chief behaving badly with a story of a municipal police chief receiving broad acclaim from her community. The News and Observer [reports](#) that businesses are clamoring for an opportunity to host Fuquay-Varina Police Chief Laura Fahnestock's "Coffee with a Cop" program following her successful first year as chief. Fahnestock reportedly has made efforts to bridge an acknowledged racial divide in the community by training her officers on topics such as racial profiling and [implicit bias](#), and participating in the town's Martin Luther King Day march. Cognizant of the recent national attention to officer-involved shootings, Fahnestock has organized trainings for her officers that are intended to help them better understand the communities they serve.

Bond Forfeiture Puts Elderly Couple's Home in Jeopardy. The News and Observer [reports](#) that an elderly couple in North Raleigh are in jeopardy of losing their home to bond forfeiture after their son failed to appear on drug charges in 2008. Their son Mark Brodie, charged with trafficking heroin and being a habitual felon, is now living in California according to his sister and "has refused a request from the family to turn himself in."

Got a Warrant for That Stingray? Ars Technica [reports](#) that Maryland law enforcement officers will no longer be deploying stingrays willy-nilly in the Old Line State. The Maryland Court of Special Appeals reportedly has ruled that "state police must not only obtain a warrant before deploying a cell-site simulator, but are required to also fully explain to the court what exactly the device does and how it is used." The Ars Technica article notes that the use of stingrays often has been obscured by nondisclosure agreements between law enforcement agencies and the manufacturer of the devices. Stingray enthusiasts may be interested in a [piece published earlier this year](#) by The Verge that describes how Daniel Rigmaiden (infamous for his compelled participation a few years ago in *United States v. Rigmaiden*) worked from prison to expose law enforcement's secret use of stingrays to the public.

Turbulence in Kansas Courts. The New York Times [reports](#) that Kansas Governor Sam Brownback and political allies "have expressed outrage over State Supreme Court decisions that overturned death penalty verdicts, blocked anti-abortion laws and hampered Mr. Brownback's efforts to slash taxes and spending." Responding these perceived politically motivated rulings, Kansas's state Senate recently passed a bill that expands authority to impeach justices in

certain situations. Notwithstanding the bill, the report suggests that the upcoming November elections are likely to be the real battleground for the conflict. Beyond Kansas, the article indicates that judicial elections across the country are expected to draw heavy political spending this year.

Acronym Accident. George Mason University's law school recently [announced](#) that it was changing its name to "The Antonin Scalia School of Law at George Mason University." Unfortunately, the first five words of the new name "form an acronym that has a phonetic resemblance to a vulgarity" according to [this post](#) from The Wall Street Journal. In the wake of this revelation, the school engaged in a little marketing jiggery-pokery and is now presenting the name as "The Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University." Rumor has it that incoming 1L's get unlimited free applesauce.