



## News Roundup

**Author :** SOG Staff

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With experts [predicting](#) that this Fourth of July weekend will be one of the busiest travel weekends in history, the News Roundup has tips for staying safe and obeying the laws on North Carolina roads. The NCDOT wants North Carolinians to be aware that new [provisions](#) in the State's motor vehicle laws will go into effect beginning today, July 1st. Notably, registered mopeds now are [required](#) to carry liability insurance, and a new late fee has gone into effect for vehicle owners who fail to pay their registration renewal by the expiration date. Motorists can [avoid](#) road rage by taking [note](#) of construction work that may affect travel lanes along the interstates and lead to frustrating delays. Finally, the DOT warns that celebrations can quickly go from festive to fatal if you choose to drive after drinking – law enforcement agencies across the state are [participating](#) in Operation Firecracker, a campaign to get drunk drivers off the road. Stay safe, stay free, and keep reading for more news.

**Reckless Domestic Assault is “Misdemeanor Crime of Domestic Violence.”** The United States Supreme Court [decided](#) this week that a misdemeanor domestic assault based on reckless, rather than knowing or intentional, conduct qualifies as a “misdemeanor crime of domestic violence” for purposes of the federal prohibition on firearms possession by persons convicted of such crimes. The opinion was delivered in *Voisine v. United States*, and readers should expect a blog post on the case soon.

**Prosecutor Suspended.** WRAL [reports](#) that Wake County Assistant District Attorney Colleen Janssen has been placed on paid leave following a [ruling](#) from the court of appeals that she violated two defendants' rights by withholding evidence and failing to correct false testimony in jointly tried robbery and assault cases. The Charlotte Observer has a report about the court of appeals ruling [here](#), and the News & Observer has another [here](#). As previously noted on this blog, Janssen's father was kidnapped at the behest of a gang member whom Janssen had prosecuted, in an unrelated case, for attempted murder.

**Journalist Works as Prison Guard.** Mother Jones magazine, a publication that notes that it is often identified as liberal magazine, has a lengthy five-chapter [account](#) of one journalist's experience working as a private prison guard for four months. An editor's [note](#) says that the magazine took the “extraordinary [step]” of authorizing the undercover investigation “because press access to prisons and jails has been vastly curtailed in recent decades” and “[t]here is no other way to know what truly happens inside but to go there.”

**Inmates Baptized at Jail.** The News & Observer [reports](#) that 39 inmates were baptized at the Durham County jail on Sunday. A number of churches participated in the event which was held at the request of an inmate. Small wading pools were set up in a secure parking lot to facilitate the event.

**U.S. Supreme Court to Hear N.C. Redistricting Case.** Politico [reports](#) that the U.S. Supreme Court “has agreed to consider whether North Carolina's 2011 Congressional redistricting plan violated the Constitution by relying too heavily on race in drawing district boundaries.” The plan was struck down by a lower court in a divided ruling earlier this year. The Charlotte Observer also has a story about the issue [here](#).

**Social Media Two-Step.** Gizmodo [reports](#) that an enterprising woman has started a business where she uses social media and other websites on inmates' behalf for a fee. She reportedly maintains inmates' Facebook pages, finds them dates using online dating services, and even does light historical research for novels. Fifty dollars buys three

months of Facebook maintenance, which seems like a deal.