

News Roundup

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The News & Observer [reports](#) that Governor Roy Cooper filed a lawsuit against legislative leaders last Friday that, among other things, contends that the [new law](#) that reduces the number of judges on the Court of Appeals impermissibly changes the length of a judge's term without a supporting amendment to the state constitution. The Observer report says the lawsuit is "one of a series that Cooper . . . has filed since taking office in January" and is part of an ongoing power struggle between Cooper and legislative leaders. Keep reading for more news.

Prison. This week the Charlotte Observer published a series of articles about corruption and abuse in North Carolina prisons. An overview story is available [here](#), and the full collection of articles is available at [this link](#). The articles describe numerous instances in correctional institutions across the state where prison system employees allegedly abused inmates, introduced contraband, or facilitated violence.

Indicating that the broad majority of prison system employees ethically perform their difficult and dangerous work, the articles suggest that the rural locations of many prisons combined with rates of compensation that are relatively low compared to other states creates an environment where some employees are susceptible to corruption.

Concealed Carry. The News & Observer [reports](#) that a bill that would make it legal to carry a concealed handgun without a concealed-carry permit is moving through the House this week. According to the report, the bill would allow anyone over the age of 18 to carry a concealed handgun without a permit; under current law, a person must be at least 21 to apply for a concealed-carry permit.

Word of Faith Trial. A criminal trial arising from the [allegedly abusive activities](#) of the Word of Faith Fellowship church in Spindale is underway this week. The Asheville Citizen-Times [reports](#) that Brooke Covington, a minister at Word of Faith, is on trial for assaulting and kidnapping congregant Matthew Fenner in an effort to expel his "homosexual demons." Four other church members have been charged in the case and each will be tried separately. Fenner has said that congregants abused him for two hours as he was leaving a prayer service in 2013. Covington's defense attorney offered a different account, saying that the congregation gave Fenner a routine prayer that concluded with Fenner hugging everybody.

Election Worker Indicted. WNCN [reports](#) that a woman who was working at the Granville County Board of Elections in preparation for the 2016 presidential election has been indicted for restoring or attempting to restore the voting rights of roughly 250 felons. The report says that the county elections director discovered the scheme and that the voter database was corrected prior to the election.

Tiger Woods. As ESPN [reports](#), Tiger Woods was charged with impaired driving in Florida over Memorial Day weekend. Officers discovered Woods disoriented behind the wheel of a damaged vehicle that was stopped on the side of the road. It appears that Woods was impaired by a substance other than alcohol, and he released a statement attributing his condition to an unexpected reaction to prescription medication.

Snake Safety. Folks, it's snake season in the land of the pine – [WLOS says](#) that calls to the Carolinas Poison Center about snake bites quadrupled in April compared to the same month last year. Lee County Sheriff Tracy Carter noticed the increased snake activity and, after capturing a black snake, took to [YouTube](#) to warn county residents to be careful

while outdoors and to keep their basement doors closed to prevent copperhead invasions. It's good advice, so the News Roundup is passing it along.