

News Roundup

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Categories : [Uncategorized](#)

Date : November 22, 2017

As the Los Angeles Times [reports](#), notorious cult leader and convicted murderer Charles Manson died this week of natural causes at the age of 83. Manson had spent the past five decades in prison in California for his involvement in a string of murders in the summer of 1969. The Times story notes that several of Manson's followers remain in prison; one, Leslie Van Houten, was granted parole in September of this year but California Governor Jerry Brown has yet to decide whether to release her.

With a long holiday weekend upon us, this is the last blog post of the week. Enjoy the holiday and keep reading for more news.

Clean Slate Clearinghouse. A new resource has launched that is designed to help people clear their criminal records so that they can more easily find employment and avoid the various other collateral consequences of a criminal conviction. Called the [Clean Slate Clearinghouse](#), the project provides people with information about the record clearance process in every state, supports legal service providers engaged in record clearance work, and gives policymakers information about best practices with regard to record clearing. John Rubin served as an advisor to the project.

Conjunction Injunction. The Wilmington Star-News [reports](#) that last week a superior court judge granted a preliminary injunction against members of Wilmington street gang that prohibits two dozen members from associating with other gang members or engaging in gang-related activities. The complaint seeking the injunction was filed on behalf of the New Hanover County District Attorney, the Wilmington City Attorney's Office, and local law enforcement agencies. The Star-News report says this is the second time that a civil injunction has been used against a street gang in North Carolina, with the first being in Charlotte.

Dark Web. The News Roundup previously has featured stories about the goings-on of [the dark web](#), the secret side of the internet that most people never see. WRAL [reported](#) this week that a Raleigh man, Matthew Lee Yensan, had been mass producing Xanax at a storage unit and selling it on the dark web. In addition to finding other drugs, paraphernalia, and guns when arresting Yensan, the WRAL report says that officers also discovered that he had more than \$700,000 in bitcoin.

Fee Notice. WRAL [reports](#) that the AOC has developed a solution to the potential logistical difficulties posed by [recent legislation](#) that requires notices to be mailed to every affected state or local entity before a judge may waive or remit any court fines or costs. Rather than mail a notice in every case, once a month the AOC will mail a standard letter to every affected entity stating that fines and costs could be waived at any criminal hearing on the calendar, and providing a link to the online courts calendar.

Get Out of Jail Fee. The Associated Press [reports](#) that last week a judge in Chicago threw out the felony drug convictions of fifteen men because a Chicago police officer, Ronald Watts, framed the men as part of an extortion scheme. Watts would demand money from citizens who lived in the community he policed, and would plant drugs on those who refused to pay. The report notes that Watts pleaded guilty to stealing money from an FBI informant in 2013 and was sentenced to a term of imprisonment that was shorter than that of most of the people he framed.

Search Settlement. On an April day earlier this year, the Sheriff of Worth County, Georgia, Jeff Hobby, was struck by a hunch – at least one student at Worth County High School was in possession of drugs. Where were the drugs? Likely in someone’s underpants. Whose underpants? The only way to find out was for deputies to lock down the school and search every student, sometimes touching students’ genitals and exposing their breasts. Surprising students and law enforcement officers alike, nobody had any drugs. Not surprising anybody, except perhaps Hobby, the sheriff’s department had to settle a [federal civil rights lawsuit](#) brought by the students for \$3 million, twice the annual budget of the department.