

News Roundup

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The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, a United Nations tribunal established to prosecute war crimes committed during the Yugoslav Wars, was the scene of a dramatic act of defiance this week. As the New York Times [reports](#), after it was announced that his 20-year sentence for war crimes and crimes against humanity had been upheld, Slobodan Praljak rose to his feet and declared “Slobodan Praljak is not a war criminal, I reject your judgment with contempt.” Praljak then swallowed the contents of a small container and announced that he had taken poison; he died shortly thereafter. Keep reading for more news.

Execution Drugs. While lethal substances seemingly are easily obtainable in international criminal courts, they are in short supply in South Carolina according to [this article](#) from the Charleston Post and Courier. When that article was published last week, it was unknown whether the state had the drugs required for an execution by lethal injection that was originally scheduled for today. Shortly thereafter, South Carolina officials [confirmed](#) that they couldn’t secure the necessary drugs, a situation that is becoming increasingly common as manufacturers have become unwilling to sell drugs for use in executions.

Prosecutors. The Charlotte Observer [reports](#) that last week President Donald Trump officially signed in Andrew Murray as the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina. Murray previously served as the District Attorney of Mecklenburg County.

Spencer Merriweather, an 11-year veteran of the Mecklenburg District Attorney’s Office, was sworn in as Murray’s replacement on Monday of this week. Merriweather is the first African-American district attorney in the history of Mecklenburg County. Another [article](#) from the Observer provides detail about Merriweather’s approach to his new position and recounts an incident from his youth where he was the victim of racial profiling in Philadelphia.

Carpenter. The U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments this week in *Carpenter v. United States*, a case which presents difficult issues regarding law enforcement access to cell site location information. Regular readers may recall that Jessie [previewed the case](#) in a blog post a few months ago. An [article](#) from the Economist analyzing this week’s oral argument suggests that a majority of the justices were amenable to the notion that allowing access to cell site location information without a warrant infringes upon Fourth Amendment interests, but that there was no clear agreement among the justices on a doctrinal path forward.

Winter Webinar. As the calendar turns to December, the thoughts of criminal law practitioners across the state drift towards that most wonderful time of year – the hour and a half between 1:30 and 3:00pm on Friday, December 8 when John Rubin, Shea Denning, and Phil Dixon bring us the [Winter Criminal Law Webinar](#). Hit the link to sign yourself up for 1.5 hours of CLE, the registration deadline is Wednesday, December 6.

Sparking Joy. The Asheville Police Department’s evidence room was in poor condition for quite some time – guns were stored in trash cans, the shelves would’ve sent Marie Kondo into a conniption, and the lieutenant assigned to oversee evidence likened the scene to an “episode of Hoarders.” Those days are gone, according to this report from [WLOS](#) which says that all items in the evidence room have been inventoried and shows pictures of new storage and organization systems.