

News Roundup

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On Tuesday, a 15-year-old high schooler with a handgun killed two fellow students and wounded sixteen others in Kentucky. According to [NBC News](#), the shooter opened fire in a common area of Marshall County High School just before 8:00 a.m., sending the school into chaos as students desperately fled the attack. Police officers arrived at the school minutes later, quickly disarming the shooter and taking him into custody. Bailey Nicole Holt died at the scene and Preston Ryan Cope died later at a hospital. Keep reading for more news.

Crime Decline. Attorney General Jeff Sessions wrote an op-ed in [USA Today](#) this week that says that President Donald Trump has delivered on the promise he made at his inauguration to put a stop to “American carnage.” Sessions cited statistics in the FBI’s [Preliminary Semiannual Uniform Crime Report, January – June 2017](#) indicating that there was a decrease in overall violent crime in the first six months of 2017 compared to the same period in 2016, and said that last year the Justice Department “brought cases against more violent criminals than in any year in decades.” Sessions pledged to support state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies in a continuing effort to further reduce crime rates.

The Wilmington Star-News [reports](#) that the raw crime rate in Wilmington in 2017 was the lowest in 30 years, with just fewer than 5,000 offenses recorded. Violent crime was up slightly, but other categories of crime were down.

Beast Mode. [WLOS](#) says that Dr. Stephen Frost recently set a record by becoming the oldest North Carolinian to graduate from Basic Law Enforcement Training at age 72. Frost has been volunteering for the Buncombe County Sheriff’s Office for the past four years and plans to become a reserve for the department. The age record is notable, but more impressive is that Frost’s fellow graduates gave him the “Beast Award” for setting the pace in physical training.

Banned Books. The News & Observer [reports](#) that the North Carolina Prison System has removed Michelle Alexander’s book “The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness” from the system’s list of banned books. The Observer story also says that the banned book list will be reviewed to determine whether other titles should be removed.

Nassar. Last week the News Roundup noted the remarkable sex offense [sentencing hearing](#) for former USA Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar. After seven days of testimony from more than 150 victims, the hearing came to a close this week and Nassar was sentenced to [40 to 175 years](#) in prison. The New York Times has an [article](#) about the unusual sentencing hearing and the presiding judge, Rosemarie Aquilina.

Human Trafficking. A [press release](#) from the Department of Homeland Security explains that January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. The press release references DHS’s [Blue Campaign](#), a unified effort by the Department to raise public awareness about human trafficking and provide training to law enforcement regarding trafficking investigation.

Divine Intervention. As the News Roundup has [noted](#), advice about sex crimes sometimes comes from unexpected sources. Such was the case in a jury room in Texas last week where, just after reaching a guilty verdict on a sex trafficking charge, the jurors were informed by the presiding judge that [God told him](#) to attempt to sway the jury to

acquit the defendant. Before recusing himself from the punishment phase of the trial, the judge told attorneys that he was “sorry if [he] messed anything up.”