



News Roundup

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This week a Pennsylvania grand jury released a report of an investigation into six of the state's eight Catholic dioceses which says that there is credible evidence that more than 300 "predator priests" sexually abused more than 1000 children over decades. The report further alleges that the church orchestrated a sophisticated cover-up of the sex crimes. The New York Times has an overview of the report [here](#), and the full report, thorough and unflinching, is available [here](#). The statute of limitations has expired for the majority of the crimes detailed in the report. Keep reading for more news.

Legislative Summary. John Rubin recently published a summary of 2018 North Carolina legislation that affects criminal law and procedure. The summary provides a narrative overview of the legislative changes and also provides links to the session laws. It is available for free [here](#).

Child Abuse Death. WRAL [reports](#) that a Wake County grand jury indicted Sharon Hayes for murder this week, a decade after a 2007 incident that resulted in Hayes pleading guilty to felony child abuse and spending six years in prison. In 2008, Hayes pleaded guilty to abusing Hinton McGee Meyer, then 11 months old, by throwing him on the floor while babysitting. Hinton died last August of pneumonia and infections attributable to those injuries.

Vibes. The #LipSyncChallenge hits keep coming folks. This week the Kill Devil Hills Police Department unleashed their rendition of "Put a Little Love in Your Heart." Check it out [here](#).

Blitzer. The Greensboro News & Record [reports](#) that former Rockingham District Attorney Craig Blitzer received a prayer for judgment continued last week with regard to his 2017 guilty plea to misdemeanor offenses arising from the Blitzer-Bradsher wife hiring scheme. In the aftermath of the scandal, Blitzer voluntarily resigned as district attorney, repaid \$48,000 in state funds, agreed to a temporary suspension of his law license, and testified against Wallace Bradsher. Superior Court Judge Paul Ridgeway stated that those consequences fulfilled the purposes of punishment for criminal activity and supported his decision to enter the PJC.

West Virginia. The News Roundup has been keeping track of developments in the West Virginia Supreme Court impeachment saga over the [past few weeks](#), following news coverage that focused mostly on lavish spending by the justices. On Monday, the West Virginia House of Delegates voted to impeach the entire court. As the story has stirred the plot has started to thicken, with [news reports](#) beginning to examine the degree to which partisan politics are influencing the proceedings. That aside, the link includes a picture of a now-infamous \$32,000 couch in the chambers of Chief Justice Allen Loughry and one thing is clear: someone was robbed blind.

Shadow Justice. The Washington Post [reports](#) that a horse named Justice, once known as Shadow, is suing his former owner for negligence. Last summer, Justice's owner pleaded guilty to criminal neglect after the horse was discovered underfed and without proper shelter. The Post report says the lawsuit is part of an effort by animal rights lawyers to get courts to recognize animals as plaintiffs in civil suits. Though we don't address that novel approach to civil litigation, Aimee Wall and I do cover a wide range of other animal law issues in a book due out later this year – [North Carolina Guide to Animal Services Law](#). Keep it on your radar.