

News Roundup

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Last week the North Carolina State Bar was the target of a ransomware attack, a type cyberattack where the attacker gains control of a computer system and demands a ransom in exchange for relinquishing control of the system. As the State Bar explained in a [statement](#) late last week, the attack began as an infiltration of a single server and quickly spread to other servers, encrypting systems running on the servers as it went. It appears that personally identifiable information was not compromised by the ransomware, but the State Bar website and its membership and CLE portals were disabled. As of [Tuesday](#), the website was back up and limited access to the portals was restored, though any changes made to the membership and CLE databases from September 24 through September 30 were lost. Keep reading for more news.

Conner's Law. WECT reports that [House Bill 283](#), known as "Conner's Law," was signed into law by Governor Cooper this week. The law increases the penalty for assault with a firearm on a law enforcement officer, probation officer, or parole officer from a Class E to a Class D felony. It also increases penalties for assaults on firefighters, emergency medical technicians, medical responders, and hospital personnel – taking the non-firearm deadly weapon or serious injury version of that offense from a Class H to a Class G felony, and taking the version involving use of a firearm from a Class F to a Class E felony. In addition to those changes, the law provides a death benefit to families or estates of law enforcement officers murdered in the line of duty. The law is named after former North Carolina State Trooper Kevin K. Conner, who was killed during a traffic stop in Columbus County [last Fall](#).

State Fair & Sex Offenders. ABC 11 [reports](#) that North Carolinians for Rational Sexual Offense Laws is advocating for registered sex offenders to be allowed to attend the North Carolina State Fair. [State law](#) prohibits certain registered sex offenders from being on the State Fair Grounds during the period of time that the fair is being conducted.

College Admissions Fraud. The Duke Chronicle [reports](#) that a couple who paid \$125,000 to have their daughter's ACT and SAT exam scores boosted in hopes that she would be admitted to Duke University each have pleaded guilty to federal mail fraud offenses and have been sentenced to a month in prison, in addition to fines and community service. Marcia Abbott, who graduated from Duke in 1981, and her husband Greg paid a proctor to correct their daughter's test scores, causing her to score a 35 out of 36 on the ACT and a 1510 out of 1600 on the SAT. The Abbotts said that their daughter did not know of their scheme and Duke admissions officials did not comment on whether she had applied to the university. The Los Angeles Times has more detail [here](#).

Serial Killer. The FBI [announced](#) this week that its Violent Criminal Apprehension Program has been working over the past five years to link unsolved murders across the nation to a convicted murderer named Samuel Little and has confirmed that he is the most prolific serial killer in United States history. Little has confessed to 93 murders and the FBI has been able to verify 50 of the confessions, with many more pending confirmation. Between 1970 and 2005, Little strangled victims, who usually were black women, in several states across the country. He was arrested frequently over that period of time for various offenses but was not convicted of murder until 2014. The FBI is asking for the public's help in matching unidentified victims to his confessions which have not yet been confirmed.

Joshua Brown. [Last week](#) the News Roundup noted the case of Amber Guyger, the former Dallas police officer who was convicted of murder after shooting her neighbor in his apartment. As the Dallas Morning News [reports](#), just days after the trial ended there was a major development associated with the case when one of the witnesses, Joshua

Brown, was shot and killed at a Dallas apartment complex. Brown was the next-door neighbor of Botham Jean, the man Guyger killed, and testified to events he witnessed surrounding Jean's death. There was immediate [speculation](#) that Brown's killing was related to his testimony in the case, but it now appears that he was shot in a botched drug deal.