

## News Roundup

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I've been at the beach the past couple of days, teaching at conferences. (It's a tough job, but someone has to do it.) One of the talks I gave was about GPS tracking, so [this story](#) about a man who discovered a tracking device on his car and the FBI's subsequent efforts to retrieve the device, caught my eye. The subject gave the device back upon request, but legally, I wonder if the FBI "abandoned" the item when agents attached it to the subject's car. Heck, someone once threw a dirty sock into my car when I left it parked with its convertible top down, and I didn't go looking for the owner.

In other news:

1. Locally, the big news continues to be centered in Raleigh, where the *News and Observer* [reports](#) that a hearing will be held to determine whether SBI agent Duane Dever committed contempt of court by giving false testimony to the Innocence Inquiry Commission. The paper is also [reporting](#) that Colon Willoughby, the Wake County district attorney, has "has initiated a criminal probe into unreported flights by the campaign of Gov. Bev Perdue." And a final tidbit of state capital news: former Speaker of the House Jim Black has been [released from federal prison](#).
2. North Carolina's also been in the news lately because of [this ranking](#) of America's most crime-ridden neighborhoods. We have two areas in the top 25: the North Tryon Street area of Charlotte is number 11, and the East 21st Street area of Winston-Salem is number 16. Durham, my oft-maligned hometown, doesn't rate.
3. The *New York Times* has an interesting [story](#) that may capture some of the differences between the United States and Europe: a French trader who lost \$7 billion of his employer's money doing unauthorized trades was just sentenced to three years in prison. This [commentary](#) argues that under the federal sentencing guidelines, the same crime here would have carried a 100-year term.
4. Speaking of foreign countries, California police deployed a [helicopter-guided manhunt](#) in response to the theft of a cell phone (not a fancy Apple prototype, either), while the Volokh Conspiracy [notes](#) that a Texas appellate court has upheld the introduction of evidence of a defendant's Satanism during the penalty phase of a capital trial.
5. Finally, there have been a couple of stories lately than can only be categorized as "judges behaving badly." In Pennsylvania, a judge "was cited [for disorderly conduct] earlier this month for allegedly approaching women near the state Capitol and passing out acorns he had hollowed out and stuffed with condoms." The judge's jurisdiction? The city of Intercourse. [Seriously](#). Meanwhile, in Atlanta, the headline "federal judge charged with buying drugs from stripper" pretty much says it all, but the sordid details are [here](#).