



News Roundup

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The court of appeals issued a batch of [opinions](#) this week, at least two of which are absolutely fascinating and will be featured on this blog next week. But those opinions were hardly the only big news this week:

1. Adam Liptak, in the *New York Times*, has an [article](#) arguing that the Supreme Court under Chief Justice Roberts "often provides only limited or ambiguous guidance to lower courts," despite issuing opinions of record length. Orin Kerr at the Volokh Conspiracy [responds](#) that "[n]o matter what Supreme Court opinions look like, there will always be someone who criticizes them for not being clear enough."
2. Some airline passengers are very unhappy with the "more aggressive pat-downs" that the TSA is now using on airplane passengers who refuse to walk through new body scanners. The *New York Times* has the basics [here](#), while a discussion of the possible risks of the scanners -- and a couple of images from them -- is [here](#). Of course, the use of the scanners and the pat-downs raise interesting Fourth Amendment issues, on which the *Times* story touches.
3. In [last week's news roundup](#), I mentioned the Stephen Hayes murder trial in Connecticut. CBS now [reports](#) that jurors in the case "were offered counseling services from Connecticut's Judicial Branch following sentencing." Nine jurors accepted. According to the article, a "handful" of states provide for such counseling.
4. Outgoing Florida governor Charlie Crist appears [poised to pardon Jim Morrison](#), lead singer of the Doors, who was convicted of indecent exposure after a concert 40 years ago. It may be cold comfort for Morrison, who died while appealing the conviction.
5. Finally, an interesting [story](#) out of Puerto Rico, where a man who dragged a horse behind his truck was sentenced to 12 years in prison under a new animal cruelty law. The horse was permanently injured but not killed, causing some to ask whether the new law protects animals more than people.