



COURTHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

Closing Arguments

The week in Courthouse News

November 3, 2023

With Election Day around the corner, the one-year countdown to the next presidential race is undeniably upon us, and this week court challenges began heating up in the movement to get Donald Trump disqualified from the 2024 ballot.

Trial kicked off in Colorado where [six voters filed a lawsuit](#) hitched to the theory that Trump is DQ'd under a 14th Amendment provision that [bars anyone who's violated an oath to uphold the Constitution](#) from holding public office. The voters place Trump [egging on the storming of the U.S. Capitol](#) in that category. [[Amanda Pampuro](#)]

In Minnesota, a bipartisan group of voters, which includes former state officials, [argued a similar suit at the state's high court](#). Trump's lawyer told the Minnesota Supreme Court his client hadn't participated in an insurrection, nor did one take place that day. [[Andy Monserud](#)]

Free Speech For People, which represents the Minnesota voters, also organized a petition to exclude Trump from the ballot in Michigan. Earlier this week [Trump sued the Michigan secretary of state](#) seeking an order requiring her to put his name on the next year's presidential ballot. [[Joe Harris](#)]

As the campaign clock starts ticking, though, Trump's immediate future includes big plans outside his run for office: He's slated to [begin testifying next week](#) in the New York AG's \$250 civil fraud suit.

This week his [two older sons](#) each [took the stand](#), and his lawyer Chris Kise's mouthing off about the judge's clerk [earned the attorney a Friday afternoon gag order](#). [[Erik Uebelacker](#)]

Much more Courthouse News to follow. Don't forget to vote.

— [Nina Pullano](#)

Here's what else happened in court this week:



After just over four hours of deliberation, [Manhattan jurors convicted former FTX CEO Sam Bankman-Fried](#) of all seven criminal fraud counts facing the onetime billionaire cryptocurrency mogul. SBF faces a maximum of 115 years in prison at his sentencing next March. [[Josh Russell](#)]

» Lawmakers [voted down an attempt to expel Rep. George Santos](#) from the House as he faces a tranche of criminal charges, including money laundering and identity theft. [[Benjamin S. Weiss](#)]

» Uber and Lyft agreed to pay \$328 million over claims the ride-hailing apps cheated drivers out of hundreds of millions of dollars. That's \$290M from Uber and two installments of \$38 million to

be paid by Lyft, distributed to more than 100,000 current and former drivers in New York state. [\[Josh Russell\]](#)

» Backpage.com's former leadership [began its defense case](#) after 23 days of a projected three-month trial where the classified ad website's founder, Michael Lacey, two former execs and two former employees are [charged with Travel Act violations](#) stemming from prostitution ads posted on Backpage, disguised as escort and other legal adult services. [\[Joe Duhownik\]](#)

» In California, a group of artists lost most of a federal copyright suit against a trio of companies that they accuse of [using their artwork to train an AI image-generating tool](#) without permission or payment. Still standing is a lone direct infringement claim against Stability AI, which the plaintiffs say scraped and copied billions of copyrighted images. [\[Michael Gennaro\]](#)



Robert De Niro testified at trial in his legal feud with a former assistant while inadvertently posing for the NYC courtroom sketch of your Scorsese-directed dreams. De Niro [accuses Graham Chase Robinson of stealing from him](#); Robinson says the actor called her names and made inappropriate demands. [\[Nika Schoonover\]](#)

[Sidebar — a podcast from Courthouse News](#)



The term "witch trial" conjures up images of persecution and partiality, but OG witch case were arguably on par with the standard of the day; there were indictments, grand juries and everything — some of the accused were acquitted, after all. But some 60,000 were sent to their deaths.

Sidebar's Halloween episode examines the chilling circumstances behind the notorious Salem witch trials and the ensuing paranoia that led to widespread accusations and tragic executions.

You might even find out which character a certain co-host once played in "The Crucible." [[Hillel Aron](#) reports, [Amanda Pampuro](#) hosts, reporter [Thomas F. Harrison](#) joins as a guest]

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The Ninth Circuit [revived celebrity choreographer Kyle Hanagami's lawsuit](#) accusing Epic Games of copying his registered dance moves for an "emote" sold in its popular game Fortnite Battle Royale. [[Hillel Aron](#)]

[ICYMI: New cases and rulings on our radar](#)

» **Threats against a senator:** ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Arthur Graham, from Kenai, Alaska, is charged with [making interstate threats to kidnap and injure a current U.S. senator](#); U.S. attorneys say he sent the messages through a web form submission in September.

» **Mobile home renters' rights:** HELENA, Mont. — The Montana Supreme Court reversed a lower court's decision not to [stay a mobile home resident's eviction proceeding](#). A state law governing mobile home rentals does not allow lot-only landlords to terminate tenants' month-to-month leases without cause, even if the contract says the landlord may. Lawmakers specifically sought to ban no-cause evictions of mobile home owners renting lots.

» **Brett Favre defamation claim spiked:** HATTIESBURG, Miss. — A federal court in Mississippi [ruled in favor of Shannon Sharpe](#), a former NFL tight end and co-host of a daily sports debate show on ESPN, on former Green Bay quarterback Brett Favre's defamation lawsuit over Sharpe's comments regarding Favre's involvement in a welfare fraud scandal.

» **No to Petco rodeo:** SAN DIEGO — Animal rights groups [want the Padres to cancel a January 2024 rodeo at Petco Park](#) because they say the organizers are known for electrically prodding horses in the opening chute to make them seem like bucking broncos.

— [Daniel Conrad](#), [Kelsey Jukam](#), [Audrey Rodeman](#)

Top 8: This week's most-read stories

From across the Courthouse News website, including news from Capitol Hill, state legislative decisions and major research developments.

1. [Baltimore's former top prosecutor heads to federal court to face perjury charges](#)
2. [Trademark law and First Amendment clash in Supreme Court review of 'Trump too small' T-shirts](#)
3. [Fox News can't compel discovery from George Soros in Smartmatic defamation suit](#)
4. [Stocks drop again, but experts see light at the end of tunnel](#)
5. [Fifth Circuit sides with Texas governor over crackdown on transporting migrants](#)
6. [New York training requirement for concealed carry license challenged in Second Circuit](#)
7. [Supreme Court declines to hear case from Trump attorney involving election interference](#)
8. [Senate Democrats' defense of blue slips a scarlet letter for some](#)

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