



Closing Arguments

The week in Courthouse News

November 9, 2023

We're rounding up the news a day early in observance of Veteran's Day on Friday, but the shorter week certainly wasn't lacking in legal news.

Kicking things off on Monday, [Donald Trump took the stand](#) at the New York AG's fraud trial against the Trump family and real estate businesses. His rambling non-answers veered into attacks against AG Letitia James and Judge Arthur Engoron and prompted scolding from the judge, who repeatedly told Trump's defense attorneys to "control" their client.

Ivanka Trump [followed up her dad's testimony](#) (unlike her older brothers, [she's off the hook](#) in the lawsuit) and the state rested its case Wednesday. Trial is expected to go on for at least another month. [[Erik Uebelacker](#)]

After his messy courtroom performance, Trump hit campaign trail and rallied thousands of supporters to [troll the third Republican primary debate in Miami](#). He also took home a legal win in Minnesota, where the state's high court [dismissed a petition](#) to get his name removed from the 2024 presidential ballot. [[Alex Pickett](#), [Andy Monserud](#)]

Plus: Steve Bannon, it turns out, would very much like the D.C. Circuit to overturn his contempt of Congress conviction. Trump's former chief strategist [told the court his lawyer said he was in the clear](#) when he refused to comply with a House Jan. 6 committee subpoena because Trump had invoked executive privilege. [[Ryan Knappenberger](#)]

And that's just the Trump stuff. Much more Courthouse News ahead.

— *Nina Pullano*

Here's what else happened in court this week:



Ramping up their impeachment efforts, [House Republicans subpoenaed President Joe Biden's son Hunter](#) (who just [waged a legal battle of his own](#)) and his brother James, as well as a family associate. The GOP reps seek to tie the president to what some lawmakers have framed as shady business dealings. [[Benjamin S. Weiss](#), [Edvard Pettersson](#)]

» Manhattan jurors [awarded Robert De Niro's ex-assistant, Graham Chase Robinson, \\$1.2 million](#) in her gender discrimination lawsuit against the A-list actor and his Canal Productions company (De Niro himself dodged liability). The jury also sided with Robinson in Canal's lawsuit accusing her of siphoning money in the form of Uber rides, bougie groceries and frequent flyer miles. [[Benjamin S. Weiss](#)]

» The EU's second-highest court [sided with Google, Meta and TikTok](#) in a fight over illegal online content regulation, finding Austria overstepped its authority by imposing rules stricter than what's required in Ireland, where the companies are registered. But in other Euro legal tech news, the big guys took an L: [Apple again faces a \\$14B tax penalty](#), after the EU's *highest* court reversed a ruling that the company was exempt from taxes in Ireland. [[Molly Quell](#), [Cain Burdeau](#)]

» The Senate [confirmed the White House's 150th federal judge this term](#). Experts tell us Joe Biden is now on pace to match or surpass Trump's total number of nominees. [[Benjamin S. Weiss](#)]

» A Massachusetts Sunoco station owner [asked the commonwealth's high court to block a Boston suburb's controversial Gen Z tobacco ban](#). It prohibits selling the stuff to anyone born later than 2000 — forever. [[Thomas F. Harrison](#)]



Environmental groups [slammed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service in a federal lawsuit](#), saying the agency ignored the significant impact of coal mining on endangered fish and crawfish in Kentucky, Virginia and West Virginia, and approved hundreds of mining permits without the required protections as the species are being driven toward extinction. [[Ryan Knappenberger](#)]

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. [Eric Trump takes full responsibility for Allen Weisselberg's shady severance package](#)
2. [Eric Trump says he 'never had anything to do' with Donald Trump's financial statements; his emails suggest otherwise](#)
3. [Gray wolves officially protected once again](#)
4. [Host of 'Mueller, She Wrote' podcast sues VA, Donald Trump for retaliation](#)
5. [Challenging lawsuit to keep him off ballot, Trump calls congressman, two so-called happy warriors](#)
6. [Biden nominates two more Black women for lifetime judgeships](#)
7. [Mormon church accused of misusing billions in contributions](#)
8. [Donald Trump attacks judge, attorney general in fiery fraud trial testimony](#)



The owners of a green funeral home were [arrested on felony charges](#) including abuse of a corpse, theft and money laundering, after law enforcement discovered 188 improperly stored bodies decomposing in a warehouse two hours south of Denver. [[Amanda Pampuro](#)]

ICYMI: New cases and rulings on our radar

» **Louisiana prison reform:** BATON ROUGE, La. — A federal court in Louisiana [found in favor of a class of inmates of the Louisiana State Penitentiary](#) at Angola, who have argued since 1992 that the prison’s medical and psychiatric health care is so deficient that it constitutes cruel and unusual punishment.

» **Transformer explosions:** SAN JOSE, Calif. — An engineer from San Jose, California, was [indicted on federal charges of destroying energy facilities and using fire or explosives](#) to commit a federal crime. Peter Karasev is accused of blowing up two PG&E transformers — once in December 2022 and once in January 2023 — that resulted in the loss of power to more than 1,500 residences and businesses in San Jose.

» **ESPN spy suit:** OAKLAND, Calif. — A federal court in California [allowed some class claims to proceed against Disney](#) over its alleged collection of keystroke data from the ESPN website. The court narrows the nationwide class down to just a California class and a Pennsylvania one, and instructs the plaintiffs to bring more information about what sort of personal information is being collected from their clicks and keystrokes.

— *Daniel Conrad, Kelsey Jukam*

Sidebar — a podcast from Courthouse News



In the latest episode of Sidebar, the team examines the chilling circumstances behind the notorious Salem witch trials and the ensuing paranoia that led to widespread accusations and tragic executions.

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