



COURTHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

Closing Arguments

The week in Courthouse News

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On Christmas morning, millions of loved ones will open up the brand new Apple Watch they've been eyeing, thrilled spend the holiday setting up a shiny gadget.

Soon, though, it may be harder to get your hands on the smartwatches bearing the name of Steve Jobs' legacy.

The company this week [announced plans to pause sales in the U.S. of two recent Apple Watch models](#), as it awaits confirmation of federal trade regulators' October ruling that it can't import devices that infringe a medical technology company's patents for measuring blood oxygen. [\[Edvard Pettersson\]](#)

It wasn't just Apple grappling with holiday season legal issues; in the dwindling days of 2023, tech companies came into sharp focus.

Google [agreed to pay \\$700 million to settle the California AG's claims](#) that it held a monopoly in the Android smartphone app market, and inflated prices for in-app purchases, in violation of state and federal laws. [\[Alan Riquelmy\]](#)

The Golden State's federal appellate court also [reversed a win for Uber](#) in its fight against a law that would require the ride-hailing giant to classifying its drivers as employees rather than independent contractors. A panel of 11 randomly chosen judges will rehear the attempt. [\[Edvard Pettersson\]](#)

Overseas, Elon Musk is in hot water over disinformation and hateful content on X (formerly Twitter). European Union regulators [launched a probe into Musk's anything-goes approach](#), marking the EU's first attempt at enforcing its Digital Services Act, which took effect in August. [\[Cain Burdeau\]](#)

And in New York, [the state AG is taking on SiriusXM](#), claiming it makes it too hard for customers to ditch their unwanted radio subscriptions. State regulators say the easy online signup is out of sync with a burdensome cancellation process involving customer service reps trained not to take "no" for an answer. [[Erik Uebelacker](#)]

Closing Arguments will take a break next week. We wish you a wonderful holiday season and look forward to catching up in the new year. 'Til then! 🥂

— *Nina Pullano*

Here's what else happened in court this week:



The Colorado Supreme Court found [Donald Trump ineligible to hold office under the 14th Amendment](#), booting him from the state's Republican primary ballot. Next up: SCOTUS review. [[Amanda Pampuro](#)]

» Rudy Giuliani, better known to Closing Arguments readers as "America's Payor," [filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in New York](#). He cited nearly \$153 million in liabilities, including trial judgments, unpaid taxes and legal fees. [[Josh Russell](#)]

» Southwest was [fined \\$140 million for flight cancellations that upended 2022 holiday travel](#) at the airline and left two million passengers stranded. [[Nolan Stout](#)]

» Disney [owes a San Francisco special effects company more than half a million dollars](#) after jurors determined it ripped off facial motion capture technology in order to create Beast in the 2017 "Beauty and the Beast" live action remake. [[Natalie Hanson](#)]

» In a split verdict, [jurors convicted Marvel star Jonathan Majors on two counts, and cleared him on the other two](#), following his Manhattan trial on charges stemming from a 2021 altercation with his ex-girlfriend. [\[Josh Russell\]](#)



A Texas federal judge [sent a sprawling antitrust case against turkey processors — including Butterball, Tyson and Hormel Foods — to Chicago](#), where a similar consolidated action is pending. [\[Dave Byrnes\]](#)

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. Final witness delivers blistering testimony against Trump in civil fraud case
2. Judge: Trump's star witness 'lost all credibility' after NYC fraud testimony
3. [Op-Ed] Republicans hate the Sermon on the Mount
4. Virginia Supreme Court sides with fired teacher in pronoun dispute
5. Drug-sniffing dog searches fall under Fourth Amendment protections, NY appellate court rules
6. Kratom's overdose potential at issue in smuggling case
7. [Brief] 'Abusive' DEA agent
8. Binance, founder Changpeng Zhao agree to pay over \$2 billion in fines and fees



The "Nirvana baby" who sued the Seattle grunge band for child pornography [won a new chance to pursue his claims](#), thanks to a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling. [[Edvard Pettersson](#)]

ICYMI: New cases and rulings on our radar

» **Ayahuasca exemption denied:** ATLANTA — The 11th Circuit [upheld a Florida federal court's dismissal](#) of Soul Quest Church of Mother Earth's challenge to a DEA decision prohibiting it from using ayahuasca tea in its religious retreats. The lower court lacks jurisdiction to review the DEA's denial on its merits because the decision was made under the Controlled Substances Act.

» **Greenwashing gas:** SEATTLE — Two Indian tribes say [big oil and gas companies deceptively promote a clean-energy image](#), despite knowing for decades that their products cause irreparable environmental harm.

» **No retrial in Madoff money matter:** MANHATTAN — The Second Circuit was "unmoved" by [objections brought by a Miami-based fund that was a customer of Bernie Madoff's](#) investment advisory firm. Irving Picard, the lawyer entrusted to liquidate Madoff's LLC, won a jury verdict and court judgment requiring the fund to pay more than \$18 million, including \$12.8 million that it received from two Chase accounts used by the Madoff firm.

— *Daniel Conrad, Audrey Rodeman*

Sidebar — a podcast from Courthouse News



In the latest episode of Sidebar, the whole team reflect on the biggest legal headlines in 2023. One political main character took center stage again and again... and no, we aren't talking about George Santos. Listen to the [Big bold beautiful 2023 recap](#).

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