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NORTHWEST FLORIDA

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Barrett: ‘I’m nobody’s justice’ – including Donald Trump’s



Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett is the youngest member of the court and could be there far into the future. JACK GRUBER/USA TODAY

In interview, she discusses how she views role on high court

Maureen Groppe and Susan Page
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – When Amy Coney Barrett was nominated to the U.S. Supreme Court five years ago, her supporters assumed and her critics feared she would be a reliable vote for President Donald Trump.

But in an interview with USA TODAY, Barrett declared: “I’m nobody’s justice.”

Indeed, she has been more independent than either side thought at first, and is now seen as an occasional swing vote on an admittedly conservative court.

That has surprised some analysts and outraged Trump’s MAGA base. What would she do if Trump called her?

“I might wonder if he had the wrong number,” Barrett said.

In a wide-ranging, hourlong interview about her new book, “Listening to the Law,” being published Sept. 9 by Sentinel, Barrett discussed how she views her role, how being a working mother has helped her better understand some cases, and why she turned up the heat on one of her liberal colleagues.

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DEATH ROW CASE

Florida Supreme Court rejects appeal

NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA

The Florida Supreme Court on Sept. 4 unanimously rejected an appeal by a death row inmate convicted in the 1990 murder of a woman kidnapped from a Walton County bar where she worked.

An attorney for Ernest Suggs raised a series of arguments in the appeal, including that a serial killer confessed to murdering the victim, Pauline Casey.

Suggs was convicted of kidnapping Casey from the Teddy Bear Bar, stabbing her repeatedly, and leaving her body along a dirt road, according to court documents.

Courts also had denied a series of earlier appeals before Sept. 4’s opinion, which was written by Justice Jamie Grosshans.

For example, the new opinion said there is “no reasonable probability” that a confession by the alleged serial killer would lead to Suggs being acquitted in another trial.

“At trial, the state presented significant physical evidence connecting Suggs to the murder — including Casey’s palmprints in Suggs’ vehicle, Casey’s fingerprints on the outside of Suggs’ vehicle, Casey’s blood on Suggs’ shirt, and tire tracks on the dirt road where Casey’s body was found that were consistent with those of Suggs’ vehicle,” Grosshans wrote.

“Law enforcement found keys to the Teddy Bear Bar and a beer glass from that bar near Suggs’ home. The state also presented testimony that Casey was last seen alive with Suggs.”

Scallop season suspended in Gulf County Zone

The Destin Log
USA TODAY NETWORK

Although many from the area like to go scalloping this time of year in Gulf County, plans may have to go on hold. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has announced a temporary closure of recreational bay scallop harvest in the Gulf County Zone.

Where is the Gulf County Zone?

This region includes all state waters from the Mexico Beach Canal in Bay County to the western most point of St. Vincent Island in Franklin County, including St. Joseph Bay.

Why is it being temporarily closed?

The FWC is proactively testing and

acting to keep Floridians safe. This precautionary measure is due to the detection of toxin-producing algae Pseudo-nitzschia and Pyrodinium bahamense.

When will the zone reopen?

The Gulf County Zone could reopen for scallop harvesting once tests show levels have decreased to safe limits, according to a news release from FWC.

The season opened on Aug. 16 and was scheduled to close on Sept. 24.

Although scallop harvesting is currently suspended in the Gulf County Zone, the area is still open for other recreational activities including fishing, boating, and swimming.

For more information and updates, visit MyFWC.com/Scallops.

This information was provided by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

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