

News Brief: Fewer Births, Fewer Police Shootings & Local Civil Rights Leader Retirement

By KUER NEWS

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Local Civil Rights Leader Rev. France Davis Retires

The Rev. France Davis of the Calvary Baptist Church has retired after serving his Salt Lake City congregation for almost 50 years. He gave his last sermon on Sunday, Dec. 29. Davis said some of his greatest accomplishments were helping to build a local housing complex for seniors and advocating for naming a street and park after two civil rights icons — Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Utah's Mignon Richmond. — Rocio Hernandez

Juvenile Judges Take Adult Cases

Utah's juvenile judges will soon begin hearing cases in adult court. The move is intended to relieve heavy dockets in the state's most populated judicial district, which includes Salt Lake, Summit and Tooele counties. The judges will preside over an adult's first court date, and decide whether to sign paperwork granting short-term protective orders in the state's 3rd District Court. Criminal caseload statewide has ticked up in recent years, from about 37,500 cases filed in 2014 to more than nearly 44,000 last year. — Associated Press

Utah Police Shootings Down In 2019

42-year-old Frederick Jeremy Atkin was shot and killed by police officers in South Ogden on Friday. It marks the eleventh officer-involved fatality in Utah this year, but that number is down by more than a third from last year. The ACLU of Utah has tracked the number of fatal officer-involved shootings for the past two years. Both the ACLU and Salt Lake Police Department said it's hard to explain exactly why the number dropped this year. — Nate Hegyi

Utah Birth Rate Drops

Utah is known for its high birth rate, but an ongoing lag has researchers wondering if the state is in a new era of lower fertility. Utah demographers expected people to start growing their families as they recovered from the Great Recession, but new census data show that even with more people working and making more money the state's fertility rate continues to drop. The 2018 rate fell to the lowest in 50 years — 2.03 births per woman last year. — Associated Press

New Off-Highway Permits

Starting Wednesday, Utah will require nonresidents to get a new type of permit for using off-highway vehicles in state parks or on public lands. The \$30 permit is good for 12 months. Utah is dropping its recognition of off-highway vehicle registrations from other states. — Diane Maggipinto

Wild Pigs At The Border

There's some concern that wild pigs are entering the Mountain West. In Montana, recent headlines have warned that wild pigs are amassing along the border with Canada. And a campaign called "Squeal on Pigs" is encouraging people to report any sightings. Researchers with the National Wildlife Research Center in Colorado say so far management efforts are keeping them at bay. — Rae Ellen Bichell, Mountain West News Bureau