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 MISSING PERSONS FOUND **131**

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**STRIKE OUT CRIME AUG. 25** 

**JUSTICE COALITION'S VICTIMS' ADVOCATE**

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Plan now to attend the 10th Annual **Strike Out Crime** exhibition baseball game between Jacksonville's **Police and Firefighters** at the **Jacksonville Baseball Grounds August 25, 2006 3:00 p.m.** followed by a game between the **Jacksonville Suns and the Tennessee Smokies at 7:05 p.m.**

**Sheriff Seagraves determined to resolve Jackie Markham case**  
*Family pleads for help to find missing mom*

By Melissa Myrick, Lisa Chapnerkar and Scott NeSmith

Our mother, Jackie Markham, has been missing from Callahan since December 14, 2000. She was last seen at what used to be Eckerd Drugs in Callahan. Her car was found at her house but she was not there. There was no credit card or cell phone activity after she left Eckerd's. Personal items of hers have been found in Jacksonville which makes us fear the worst has happened.

August 29 is her birthday. This is the sixth year that we have to wonder where our mother is. It is impossible to explain how painful normal holidays and family celebrations are without our mother or at least the knowledge of what happened to her.

At Christmas we [remember] finding her half-decorated,

cobweb-covered Christmas tree that we had to take down after the crime scene tape was removed months later. Being thankful at Thanksgiving is difficult because that was her favorite holiday and we still don't have any news of her whereabouts. We, of course, think about her on her birthday and, needless to say, Mother's Day is tougher than you could imagine.

We appreciate everyone who has been involved in this case and the countless hours that have gone into trying to find our mother. We felt like our prayers had been answered when Sheriff Seagraves brought our mother's case back to the forefront and has dedicated resources to resolving her case! We are also so appreciative for Detective Tommy Reeves coming back from retirement to pursue Mom's case. We have complete confidence in Detective Reeves'



Jackie Markham

ability to solve this case.

We know that someone out there knows what happened to our Mom. Please come forward and end the constant suffering that our family endures without this information. There are so many new television shows on now that make it seem so easy to find answers

Markham... Continued on page 4

**Criminals exploit services available to homeless**  
*Downtown businesses unite to fight vagrancy*

by Melanie Schneider

A recent DCF report estimates 85,907 homeless persons reside in Florida, 2,877 of them on the streets of Duval County.<sup>1</sup> They are casualties of broken families, domestic violence and physical and mental illnesses. Unemployment, lack of affordable housing and healthcare are factors that contribute to their poverty, but drug and alcohol addiction is the primary disabling condition in nearly half of all homeless individuals.<sup>2</sup>

Jacksonville is a great place to live, but the repercussions of homelessness cannot be ignored. Because vagrants are most prevalent in the downtown area where the majority of homeless services are located, downtown residents

and business owners are beginning to feel like victims, too. They are approached by panhandlers on a daily basis, they see the intoxicated sleeping in the park, and they step over trespassers on the way out their front doors. They must frequently hose down back entrances to their businesses which have been used in lieu of toilets.

These small business owners are not insensitive and uncaring about the needs of legitimately homeless individuals, but they know "street people" fall into at least three categories. According to Susann Marino, owner of Shugar Shack Chocolatier and founder/president of Pioneers4Jax, some are truly homeless because of job loss or illness, "people of good will who want help for their situation and conduct themselves in a good

manner."

But she says others are criminals who exploit the services available to the homeless, and there are the drug addicts and alcoholics who relieve themselves on the street and sleep wherever they happen to be. These individuals aggressively beg from citizens frequenting downtown establishments, yelling insults when ignored. A gourmet cuisine restaurant near Hemming Plaza reports feces smeared on its facade, and bricks are frequently thrown through windows in other area buildings.

**HITZ – a successful deterrent**

One way downtown residents and business owners are fighting the problem is through the High



Intensity Trespassing Zone (HITZ), a successful program implemented by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office that empowers the property owners who participate. They post

trespassing signs citing the applicable Florida Statute, which gives notice that they do not want street people sleeping,

Criminals... Continued on page 5