

# The Justice Coalition exists for YOU



**From  
the  
Director**

by  
Ann  
Dugger

When Ted Hires started the Justice Coalition 11 years ago, he did so for three reasons: to advocate for victims of violent crime, educate the public about their rights as victims and work with local law enforcement to help prevent citizens from becoming victims. We've worked hard all these years to do just that.

When victims come to us for help, they are often at the end of their rope, so to speak. They've probably encountered overworked detectives who cannot tell them what they want to know, and they don't understand why justice is not more quickly forthcoming. Accustomed to one-hour solutions on TV's forensic shows, they are frustrated when test results take many

months to be completed and when suspects are not speedily arrested.

Victims' families may be frustrated for the same reasons by the slow-moving judicial process. Most have never been involved with the criminal justice system with its legal jargon and/or procedures, and they may feel they have entered an endless maze of bureaucratic red tape and gobbledegook.

This is where the Justice Coalition's victim advocate provides invaluable service. Our advocates are trained to be liaisons between the victims who are reeling with the devastation of their loss and those who are trying to solve or adjudicate the crime. Our current advocate, Sabrina Gouch, works tirelessly and extremely effectively every day, talking to detectives and prosecutors about cases, attending court with victims and/or their families, and just "being there" to lend her support and strength during

what is possibly the worst time in their lives.

Others in our small office – all who work for low wages with no tangible benefits – fill vital roles in the organization. Each has a heart for the hurting folks who call our office in tears, not once, but often – maybe multitudes of times. We consider our jobs a ministry, that this is the place we're meant to be at this time in our lives.

For 10 years we've produced a monthly newspaper, the *Victims' Advocate*, which details stories of victims, their losses, their struggles and their victories. We publish mugshots of criminals wanted by police and those apprehended for various sexual offenses. We keep pictures of missing persons and unsolved murder victims in the public eye, hoping someone will come forward with information about the crime. We print articles of interest by Sheriff Rutherford, Mayor Peyton, Attorney Jay Howell, LCSW

Jamie Simpson and other contributors. The 35,000 copies we print don't begin to meet the demand of this valuable source of information – we need the funding to double our distribution.

Most of us may never have suffered the loss of a murdered mate, or child or parent; we may not know the agony of a missing loved one whose fate remains undetermined week after week, year after dreary year. But, unfortunately, many citizens in Jacksonville – from the Northside to the Westside, to the Beaches and affluent gated communities – know this feeling all too well. And it is for the benefit of those the Justice Coalition continues to operate.

Hopefully, you will never experience the trauma of losing a loved one to violent crime,

but if you do, you can rest assured the Justice Coalition will be available to lend its support and expertise. But we need your help to stay in business. We exist for YOU – for all of Jacksonville's citizens and those in surrounding areas – and we urge you to provide financial support to help us keep our doors open. Be it small or large, YOUR contribution will benefit those who find themselves experiencing their worst nightmare.

You can make your tax-deductible contribution through PayPal at our website: [www.justicecoalition.org](http://www.justicecoalition.org) or send a check to us at 1935 Lane Avenue S., Suite 1, Jacksonville, FL 32210.

Please let us hear from you today.



This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

- Joshua 1:8



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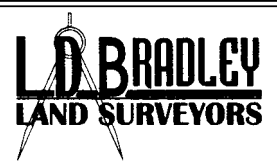
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