



**From the Director**

by Ann Dugger

# 2009 Successes provide momentum for 2010

The year 2009 was memorable - for many reasons. It was my first year working at the Justice Coalition without the wise guidance of Ted Hires, and I felt a bit lost now and then and missed him a lot. Thanks to the leadership of our wonderful board of directors, however, we moved forward, reaching new goals and accomplishing a full schedule of assisting crime victims and hosting successful fundraising events.

The national economy affected local businesses and individuals, of course, and several long-time advertisers had to pull their ads from the *Victims' Advocate*. Many other businesses, also impacted by loss of revenue and the need to cut jobs, maintained their support and worked with us to meet our budget.

Beginning with the **Together We Can Breakfast** in February, every fundraising event throughout the year was a resounding success. Mayor Peyton attended (and spoke briefly at) the TWC, along with State Attorney Angela Corey, many judges, Sheriffs, elected officials and members of law

enforcement and other agencies.

Two annual events - the **John Rowan Golf Tournament**, organized and promoted by Peg and John Rowan, Sr., and their family, and the **Longhorn Steakhouse Golf Tournament** - brought many friends and supporters together for a day of fun and good food. The annual **Ride For Justice** was the best ever, with nearly 300 motorcycles (and even more riders) participating in the 50-mile ride.

In September, to commemorate the impact Ted Hires had on the community, we held the first (of what will be an annual event) **Ted Hires Legacy Award Dinner**. Those receiving the first awards were: John and Peg Rowan, Outstanding Citizen Award; J. B. Coxwell Contracting, Inc., Business Award; and Assistant State Attorney Bernie de la Rionda, Government Agency Award. About 600 people attended the dinner at North Jax Baptist Church, and everyone said they look forward to next year.

Meanwhile, we continued to work with crime victims - new and old - and rejoiced over several victories in court: Duane and Joy Williams were relieved when their daughter's murderer was convicted and

sentenced to life in prison without parole; a rape victim's assailant received a life sentence for his crime; Buddy Pickett's murderer received 40 years; and ex-Jaguar Richard Collier saw the man who shot him 14 times receive a sentence of life without parole.

Sadly, we always get many new families suffering the loss of beloved family members, and last year was no exception. David Wiley Smith and Kevin Martin were stabbed to death in Clay County, William Hull was also killed by stabbing in Jacksonville, Robert Kearney was shot and killed, as was Clifford Bachmann. In October, the disappearance of 7-year-old Somer Thompson (and subsequent discovery of her body in a Georgia landfill) provoked local and national outrage.

Working with all these victims' families, of course, means our victim advocate spends many hours every day in court, and we've wanted for some time to hire someone to help her, so that will be upcoming this year. We recently employed a young lady, Andrea Cash, as financial support coordinator, and she has set us up on Twitter and Facebook and will be helping Larry

Cohen keep our website updated.

Other employees remain the same: Judith Chapple, Assistant Executive Director; Terri Johnson, Executive Administrative Assistant; Lorraine Sinclair, Victim Advocate; and Shirley Shaw, editor of the *Victims' Advocate*. Fran Futrill and Clyde "Pa" Mills continue to volunteer

almost daily in the office, while Pam Sullivan and others have rounded out our staff. I thank God every day for all of them.

We are so blessed here at the Justice Coalition as each one of us strives to fill our respective roles in helping innocent victims of violent crime and working to make our city safer. God bless all of you in the coming year.

Justice Coalition is now using **Facebook** (Justice Coalition) and

**Twitter** (Justice4VCTMS).

Find updates on coming events, future fundraisers, weekly developments, volunteer opportunities and other progress.

For more information about these networking sites, contact Andrea Cash at Justice Coalition

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## Inspirational Thought



And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God. That your faith should stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

## Faith Corner

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