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*The Justice Coalition began in 1995 because one man's priorities were changed. Ted Hires was the average businessman working 60 to 80 hours a week and looking out for himself until that day when he and his staff were held at gunpoint and robbed. Being a victim of crime, Ted found the criminal justice system worked harder for the criminal than the victim. As a result of Ted's experience, he formed a (501C3) non-profit organization, the Justice Coalition, and is making an effort to change the Fourth Judicial court system for the better.*

*Since 1995, the Justice Coalition has been fighting crime every step of the way. Fugitives captured are through a partnership with local media and law enforcement agencies.*

The Justice Coalition's

**Victims' Advocate**

A free newspaper supporting victims' rights published monthly by The Justice Coalition. The opinions of contributing writers are not necessarily those of the Justice Coalition's Victims' Advocate or the Justice Coalition. The Justice Coalition's Victims' Advocate welcomes both editorial and photographic submission, but they cannot be returned. Please allow six weeks for a response to submitted works. Calendar information is welcome but must be submitted one month in advance of the event.  
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All correspondence to the Justice Coalition's Victims' Advocate should be sent to:  
Justice Coalition's Victims' Advocate  
1935 Lane Ave., South, Suite 1 • Jacksonville, Florida 32210  
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**THE JUSTICE COALITION'S OBJECTIVES**

- To be available for innocent victims of violent crime
- To educate the general public on criminal justice issues
- To be pro-active in the fight against crime

**Advertising Deadline**

The deadline for advertising copy for the **April 2007 Edition** of the JUSTICE COALITION'S VICTIMS' ADVOCATE is **May 10, 2007.**

**THE SECRET WORD GAME**

Hidden in the text of the Victims' Advocate is the **SECRET WORD** for the month of **MARCH**. The rules are simple:

1. Find the word.
2. Telephone the Justice Coalition office 783-6312.
3. The first person who telephones the correct Secret Word wins a Gift Certificate to Sonny's Real Pit Barbeque Restaurant.
4. You can only win once in a twelve month period.

**SO START SEARCHING!**

Exclusions: no persons employed by the Justice Coalition, Sonny's, nor their families are eligible.

# Preventable losses: traffic fatalities and auto theft



**From the Sheriff's Desk**

Sheriff John Rutherford

Once again, I want to thank this publication for affording me the opportunity to speak directly with citizens about public safety matters that I know are of concern to us all.

This month there are two subjects I want to discuss. They are not as "high profile" as all the news lately, but for many people they matter just as much, because both issues involve a loss of property and, sometimes, a loss of life. They are preventable losses – traffic fatalities and automobile burglaries/auto theft.

**Traffic fatalities**

Our numbers are way up for the year, and we're still in the first quarter. Actually at the time this publication was going to print, we had 26 traffic-related fatalities, versus 13 for the same time frame last year. Many of these incidents involve pedestrians being struck and killed, and many times the driver was not negligent or committing any infraction, so there is no "blame" to assess for these tragedies. But many of them can be prevented.

Please remember: COURTESY, CAUTION and COMMON SENSE are the most important rules of the road!

How does a person get killed in a traffic crash or incident? Jacksonville has a lot of traffic, and drivers have a lot of distractions – from construction activity to cell

phones. We're congested, we're in a hurry, and many people are frustrated when they drive. When pedestrians cross a street at a location other than a designated crosswalk or on a corner with a light and traffic is bearing down on them from both directions, there is great potential for a tragic event.

Driving the speed limit and always wearing your seat belt in a moving vehicle sound like trite, overused warnings, but again – you'd be amazed at how many crashes involve speeds higher than those posted and unrestrained drivers and passengers. Practice ZERO TOLERANCE when you drive – don't speed and stay buckled up.

Drivers must drive defensively and with a minimal amount of distractions. IT IS THE LAW TO USE YOUR BLINKER WHEN CHANGING LANES OR TURNING. Many drivers weave in and out of traffic, without signaling, reducing a safe braking distance between themselves and the car that just pulled in front of them.

Getting angry at the rudeness of another driver won't help matters, either. Don't attempt to "get even" or otherwise draw attention to the infraction. If you have reason to be suspicious of the activities of another driver or the vehicle they are driving, please call our non-emergency number at 630-0500. On a state road, call our enforcement partners at the Florida Highway Patrol. The number is \*FHP on most cell phone services.

Our traffic teams are deployed all over the city, everyday, and looking for law breakers. This includes

pedestrians and cyclists who cross the street illegally.

**Car burglaries**

We're heading into the warm spring months, and then the summer. People are hot – and they don't want to bring their purses, jackets, wallets, briefcases and other personal items with them every time they get out of the car.

Many people don't lock their cars at all – and you would be surprised at how many people leave a spare car or house key in their cars. In addition to the opportunity this creates for auto burglary and possible auto theft, these wallets and keys lend themselves to another crime of opportunity – home and business burglary and identity theft.

Increasingly, "savvy" auto burglars know exactly what they want – a home address, a set of keys, a blank check and any obvious cash. The auto burglary is just the first crime that they might be planning! Lock up your car, keep valuables out of sight and in the trunk, and don't leave extra sets of keys or ID in the car.

Half of all the total property crime for Jacksonville in 2005 was a combination of auto burglaries and auto thefts. Our patrol officers and detectives tell me that about half of all those victims admitted to not locking their car doors or having keys in the car, when they reported the incident. Please avoid being a part of this very PREVENTABLE crime statistic.

Be Safe!

ELECT

**RAY PRINGLE** *Republican*

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ON MARCH 20th**

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