

# Letter to the editor

To the Justice Coalition Staff:

I want to say how grateful my family and I are for everyone who helped us with Ms. Mable Clyatt's assault case earlier this year. In January, my 85-year old ex-mother-in-law was attacked by Jeannie Simmons, who slit her throat and left her for dead. I was told it might take up to a year for the case to be resolved, but thanks to help from the Justice Coalition and the State Attorney's Office, within six months the defendant pled guilty and was sentenced to life in prison.

Without the great detective work of SAO investigators J. J. Thurne and John Shepherd and the outstanding way Asst. State Attorney Donna Thurson prosecuted the defendant, I don't think the outcome would have been the same. I couldn't ask for anyone better than Judge Mallory Cooper to oversee the trial. When she sentenced Simmons to life for attempted murder, Judge Cooper told her that, although she didn't succeed in killing Ms. Clyatt, she effectively ended her life as it had been.

My family and I want Lorraine Sinclair [JC Victim Advocate] to know how much we appreciated her kindness to Ms. Clyatt during the trial and everything she did to help all of us through the entire judicial process. Never having been through a situation like this before, it meant a lot to have someone explain what was going on and make sure we were informed.

I also would like to comment on the increase in crimes against our older citizens, especially vulnerable women. It seems to be a crime of convenience or opportunity, where the victims know their attackers, and the criminals kill them because they know they can be identified. The only thing they are guilty of is being nice and opening the door to someone they know. Please look out for your older family members or friends, urge them not to open their doors to anyone who is not supposed to be there at that time, and be sure to check on them frequently.

Thanks to the Justice Coalition for all you do to help victims in our community.

Larry Ward  
Owner A1A Fasteners, Ponte Vedra Beach



# Special Thanks

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Bailey Publishing
- Bovine Graphics, Brian Martin
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Correction from August: Melissa Clearman obtained a \$2500 Winn-Dixie grant. Many thanks to these wonderful Justice Coalition supporters.

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# What We Do

Services offered by the



- Provide immediate crisis intervention by assessing the victims' needs and implementing an appropriate plan of action.
- Educate victims regarding their rights as a victim of crime and criminal justice proceedings.
- Network our resources to provide the victim counseling and/or support groups, if needed.
- Accompany victims to court proceedings. This includes pretrial hearings, trials, depositions, meetings with prosecutors and injunction hearings.
- Act as a liaison between victims and prosecutors, law enforcement and the media.
- Assist victims in creating an effective impact statement to the court.
- Assist victims in applying for victims' compensation.
- Assist victims in publicizing rewards for unsolved murders and missing persons.
- Publish a monthly newspaper that prints crime victims' stories, pictures of unsolved murder victims, missing persons, wanted criminals and much more.

### Volunteer Opportunities

- Delivering our *Victims' Advocate* newspaper
- Court watching
- Clerical assistance
- Research and newspaper writing
- Fundraisers
- Posting flyers for missing persons and unsolved murders
- Special events



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