



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **First Vigil Held for Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

Hanover Park held the first of four candlelight vigils being held to bring awareness about domestic violence. Community members joined Mayor Rodney Craig and Trustee Toni Carter at Village Hall to recognize the need for services and to inform the Hanover Park residents that help is available to men, women and children who are experiencing abuse of any kind. State legislators, Representative Fred Crespo, Representative Randy Ramey and Senator Mike Noland spoke about the services being provided by Elgin Community Crisis Center and WINGS, two local agencies providing outreach and support to people trying to leave an abusive situation. They talked about the domestic violence they have witnessed first hand and highlighted legislation that has been put forth to address orders of protection and sentences for domestic abuse. Trustee Carter urged residents to call her if they need assistance with any issues related to domestic abuse. As a survivor of an abusive relationship, she can provide advice and direction to individuals in need.

Last May, Hanover Park was stunned by several acts of lethal violence including the murder of Norma Favela, killed by her boyfriend. At the vigil, she was remembered as village officials honored the woman who took in Favela's orphaned daughters. Dolores Herrera, a resident of Hanover Park was recognized as a Community Hero in being *A Light of Hope in the Struggle Against Domestic Violence*. She was among the first to reach out to the young girls immediately after the tragedy in ensuring that they were safely taken care of by their family. She arranged for the girls to visit their father in Mexico, who is unable to obtain immigration authorization to travel to be here with his daughters, and most recently she hosted a birthday party for the youngest of the two. The celebration of this little girl's third birthday party was a symbol of survival, resiliency and hope for the future. It was also a moment of closure for the Hanover Park community. "Mrs. Herrera truly made a difference and as the mother of five daughters, she stands as an outstanding example of how people can stand together to end domestic violence," stated village officials.

Domestic violence impacts families and communities regardless of race, culture, age, education or income. Northwest suburban communities have experienced several incidents of domestic

violence that resulted in the loss of innocent victims. During the month of October, several events are taking place in the northwest communities to bring awareness and education to the community. In conjunction with the Illinois Coalition to End Domestic Violence, Governor Quinn's office issued a gubernatorial proclamation last week in Springfield declaring October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The Northwest Suburban Alliance on Domestic Violence also worked with local municipalities throughout the area to pass proclamations bringing attention to Domestic Violence Awareness Month. To date, eleven local municipalities have passed such ordinances including; Hoffman Estates, Palatine, South Barrington, Elk Grove, Rolling Meadows, Schaumburg, Elgin, Prospect Heights, Mount Prospect, Bartlett and Streamwood.

The remaining candlelight vigils will take place in various communities. On October 8<sup>th</sup> at Harper College, Mayors Ken Nelson and Jim Schwanz will welcome guests to the event co-hosted by Harper College Women's Program and WINGS. Senator Matt Murphy, Representative Suzie Bassi and a survivor will speak. On October 15<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Bill McLeod will welcome community members to a vigil at Conant High School, co-hosted by Conant students and WINGS. On October 21<sup>st</sup>, Hinsdale Furriers and Harris Bank will host a vigil in Hinsdale with Representative Patti Bellock speaking. For information about all of the vigils, visit WINGS website at [www.wingsprogram.com](http://www.wingsprogram.com).

Other events to raise awareness include a symposium, an informational fair, a luncheon, "Celebration of Hope" and fashion show hosted by Hoffman Estates Chamber of Commerce to benefit WINGS.

A domestic violence symposium sponsored by the Circuit Court of Cook County's Third Municipal District is planned for October 16 at Chandler's Banquets in Schaumburg from 8:00am-4:30pm, featuring guest speakers and workshops for members of the community serving the needs of individuals and families affected by domestic violence. For information or to register, call 847-818-2528.

Cook County State's Attorney, Anita Alvarez, will speak at WINGS annual meeting luncheon, "Celebration of Hope", where community members will be honored for their efforts in assisting victims of domestic violence. The luncheon will be held on October 27<sup>th</sup> at 11 AM at Chandler's in Schaumburg. For information or to register, visit [www.wingsprogram.com](http://www.wingsprogram.com).

An informational fair on domestic violence sponsored by the Northwest Suburban Alliance on Domestic Violence will be held on October 29 at the Palatine Opportunity Center with Representative Sidney Mathias. Information is available through Rep. Mathias's District Office by calling (847) 222-0061.

The Hoffman Estates Chamber of Commerce will host a fashion show on October 30<sup>th</sup> at the Stonegate Banquet Center in Hoffman Estates. A portion of the proceeds will go to WINGS. For more information, visit [www.wingsprogram.com](http://www.wingsprogram.com) or call the Chamber at (847) 781-9100.