

Sandy Ramos Is Nifty at Fifty

AREA - "Battered women!", a subject once relegated to the closet, has today become a household word.

Sandy Ramos, the woman who opened the first shelter for battered women 21 years ago in her Hackensack home, which she also shared with her 3 children, will be celebrating her 50th birthday on Friday, October 4. This gala birthday party event will include taping for a new film about battered women (participation optional) entitled "Clean Socks for the Revolution" which is also the name of Sandy's forthcoming book. The film and book will describe the often lonely road Sandy walked when she first announced to the world that there were in fact battered women living in white middle class America.

Sandy has just opened S.O.S. Passaic, a new shelter in Passaic County in a charming 1890 farmhouse on several acres. Four years ago she intended to retire and devote her full time to completing her book, hiking, and swimming at her summer retreat in Ringwood, but found there was a tremendous need for a safe shelter house, advocacy programs, and supportive services in Upper Passaic

County. "This journey must be documented," said Ann Benedetto, the shelter's Board Chairperson, also an Interfaith Minister and teacher who is coordinating the shelter's new day care program. "There is much to be done in breaking the patterns which perpetuate violence and battering, the most debilitating of all injustices against women."

"The growth and development of the battered women's movement in the last 20 years is a sign of where we are going in the future," says Sandy. "I feel it is most important to document the true story, not from the bureaucratic "experts" viewpoint, but from the real experts, the

women who have been victims of not only battering by their partners, but who have also been "battered" and victimized by the systems and shelters established supposedly to help them. The story must be told so that we can return to the grass-roots empowering model which was originally intended."

Sandy is searching for "alumni", the women and children who have been helped at any of the shelters she has operated in Bergen and Passaic Counties since 1970, to participate in this "herstorical" event. "Alumni" can contact Sandy at 201-831-0898, 728-0287, or 342-1185 for details on how they can participate.