



## House Approves Provisions In 'Predator Punishment Act'

In an effort to combat child pornography in cyberspace, the House of Representatives voted June 11 to require the providers of Internet services to report suspected cases of kiddie porn to law enforcement authorities.

The amendment, sponsored by Congressman Bob Franks, resending the Seventh District, was included in the "Child Protection and Sexual Predator Punishment Act," which unanimously passed in the House.

"The Internet has become a major avenue of child exploitation with kiddie porn operators peddling their smut in cyberspace. This amendment gives law enforcement a powerful new tool in fighting this serious threat to our children's safety," said Congressman Franks.

The Congressman's amendment would:

- Require Internet service providers to report evidence of child pornography to law enforcement authorities.
- Require Internet service providers to turn over to police any evidence they have that would substantiate this alleged crime.
- Protect Internet service providers from criminal or civil liability if they in good faith contact law enforcement to report suspected child pornography.
- Violators of this law would face civil penalties of up to \$100,000.

"With this vital information from Internet service providers, law enforcement could move quickly to investigate and prosecute these sick individuals who exploit our children for profit," said Congressman Franks.

"Today, these Internet service providers are actually prohibited from divulging to law enforcement the contents of communications that could indicate criminal activity unless it was obtained 'inadvertently.' In effect, peddlers of kiddie porn are given free reign to exploit our children in cyberspace," the Congressman explained.

"I appreciate the fact that most Internet service providers act responsi-

bly and respond to complaints of suspected kiddie porn by immediately removing the offender from their system," he said. "However, because they are not required to report these instances to law enforcement, peddlers of child porn are free to move to a new provider or re-register under a different name."

Also included in the Predator Punishment Act, is a provision known as "Joan's Law" — legislation that was prompted by the continuing nightmare facing the D'Alessandro family of Hillsdale ever since their daughter, Joan, was murdered 25 years ago.

The provision, sponsored by Congressman Franks, would mandate a minimum term of life imprisonment with no opportunity for early release for anyone who commits a serious violent crime that results in the death of a child.

Speaking on the floor of the House, Congressman Franks said, "No family should have to endure the double tragedy of losing a child to a heinous act of violence and then watching your child's killer walk out of prison a free man."

"This provision sends a clear signal that Americans will not tolerate the killing of innocent children. If a criminal takes the life of a child during the commission of a serious violent crime, he will die in prison."

The provision establishes a minimum term of life in prison and does not preclude federal prosecutors from seeking the death penalty in cases where it is permitted.

Joan was sexually assaulted and murdered in April, 1973 while she was delivering Girl Scout cookies to a neighbor. The neighbor, Joseph McGowan, confessed to the crime and was sentenced to life in prison. He has been eligible for parole twice, first in 1987 and again in 1993. Last month, a New Jersey Appeals Court ordered a new parole hearing for McGowan, ruling that the State Parole Board did not properly weigh the likelihood that McGowan would commit another crime.



TEAM EFFORT...Democratic candidates for the Scotch Plains Township Council were honored June 7 during a champagne brunch fundraiser at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard I. Samuel. The candidates, pictured left to right, are: Franklin P. Donatelli, Tarquin Jay Bromley and Geri Morgan Samuel. On the far right is Union County Freeholder and former Fanwood Mayor Linda d. Stender.

## New Trustees are Sought By Local Education Fund

The Education Fund of Westfield is embarking on a search to identify potential new members to serve on its Board of Trustees.

The Education Fund, which recently celebrated its seventh anniversary with a party and dance at the Westfield National Guard Armory, is a philanthropic, community-based organization comprised of Westfield residents and business professionals.

The non-profit group was formed to provide an ongoing, centralized source of additional funds and resources to assist the public schools in maintaining and enhancing the quality of education, according to spokesman Mark Zenobia.

By working independently but cooperatively with the Board of Education, the Fund has been able to raise money for programs which otherwise might not be funded through the regular school budget, Mr. Zenobia stated.

Through mini-grant teacher initiatives, the Fund has been able to support projects including a music lending/listening library, an interactive CD-ROM program for teaching Spanish, and conflict resolution training models.

It has also funded Internet connections at the six elementary and two

intermediate schools, spearheaded the development of the Alumni Directory, and established monetary awards for school-based grant proposals.

The Education Fund of Westfield has developed a criteria for its trustee selection process. Members, who meet four times a year as a full board and additionally for special projects, must be able to contribute in deciding the following:

- How resources and time will be used.
- What themes will be developed for future projects.
- What fund-raising methods will be utilized.

A Fund member should be concerned with the continuance of quality education in Westfield, and bring specific business, social and/or fund-raising skills to the board, Mr. Zenobia said.

Interested community residents, parents, teachers, corporate managers and members of non-profit organizations are encouraged to reply. There is no age limit.

Responses may be sent to P.O. Box 2221, Westfield, 07090, or interested individuals may call (908) 233-9459. An information packet will be sent on request.

## Mr. Stoner Organizes Campaign for Council

Joe Stoner, a Democrat seeking election to the Westfield Town Council from the Second Ward this year, has organized his campaign in preparation for the November general elections.

Mr. Stoner was appointed to the Union County Community Development Revenue Sharing Committee by the Town Council. He also is a member of the Westfield Democratic Committee.

The candidate serves on the General Board of the American Baptist Churches, and on the Council of the American Chemical Society.

He additionally has served as Chairman of New Jersey Common Cause, as President of the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey, and as Chairman of the North Jersey Section of the American Chemical Society.

Mr. Stoner is a member of the Board of Directors of the Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA and of the New Jersey Council of Churches.

He is a chemical engineering graduate of Georgia Tech in Atlanta, and is active in the local alumni association. The candidate is a graduate of the University of Georgia, where he received a Master in Business Administration Degree.

Mr. Stoner is professionally engaged in sales of analytical instrumentation for Shimadzu Scientific Instruments of Columbia, Maryland. His career has included experience as a sales manager, a quality assurance manager, and a small business owner.

He and his wife, Jane, are active members of the First Baptist Church of Westfield. Mrs. Stoner is also a

teacher in Westfield.

Mr. Stoner's daughter, Lelia, a recent graduate of Georgia Tech, is a civil engineer in Atlanta. His son, Edward, is a freshman at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee.

Both the candidate's children attended Wilson Elementary School, Roosevelt Intermediate School and Westfield High School.

## Merry Wisler Elected Head of Voters League

The Westfield Area League of Women Voters elected its 1998-2000 slate of officers during its recent annual membership meeting.

Elected to leadership posts were Merry Wisler, President; Margaret Walker, First Vice President; June Gleason, Treasurer, and Susan Yates, Membership. All are Westfield residents.

The "Rolling Readers" program, begun this year as an off-shoot of the Juvenile Justice issue, was unanimously chosen as the main focus of local program for 1998-1999.

"Making Democracy Work" will continue to be the league's national and state-wide program focus. In addition, the Westfield Area League will continue to play a leading role in a statewide study of Charter Schools, a spokeswoman for the league said.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization primarily focused on increasing voter awareness on political issues and voter participation.

For more program or membership information please call 654-8628, or E-mail lwv@westfieldnj.com