

June 11, 2008

Jason Lewis Holds Summer Kickoff Event

Senator Pat Jehlen and other local elected officials join more than 100 people at event in Stoneham

The Jason Lewis campaign held a Summer Kickoff at the China Moon Restaurant on Sunday, June 1, hosting local community leaders and about 100 campaign supporters. Among them were State Senator Pat Jehlen whose district includes Winchester.

Also attending were Winchester Selectman Peter Haley, former Stoneham Selectmen Charlie Smith and Tony Kennedy, Stoneham Board of Assessors member Dick Mangerian, and Stoneham School Committee members Shelly MacNeill, Marie Christie and Dave Maurer.

"We have to elect Jason," said Mangerian in a speech to the crowd. "He is a great candidate and will make a great State Representative."

Kennedy added that Lewis "has the important characteristics of a leader."

"He takes the initiative to get things done," he said. "He is also very good at collaboration and works well with others, which is very important when you are one of 160 legislators trying to pass a bill."

During the speeches, more than 20 children played games and colored in coloring books, including Lewis's own daughters Sophie, 9, and Jessie, 5. Attendees were treated to a buffet-style meal.

Also speaking was Stoneham resident Wendy Smith who said Jason was ready to "get his hands dirty" fighting on behalf of public schools in the district.

"Literally," she added. "His hands were pretty dirty after spending an afternoon a few weeks ago pulling weeds at the middle school. Jason understands how important public education funding is to us. I believe Jason has the ability to effect change."

Lewis, who launched his campaign more than eight months ago, has cited education as one of his top legislative priorities along with local aid and healthcare. He cited cutbacks in programs in Stoneham and the needs of schools in the district as one of his key reasons for running.

"It is not OK for art and music to be slashed," Lewis said in his speech. "It is not OK for team teaching at the middle school to be eliminated. It is not OK for high school sports to be on the chopping block. It is not OK to keep raising fees to keep public schools afloat. We must provide our schools with sufficient funding so they can offer a well-

rounded curriculum, attract and retain great teachers, and provide our children with the quality education that they all deserve."

Lewis's own daughters are enrolled in public schools.

Lewis also called for more local aid and more affordable quality healthcare. He also said he would work for "smart economic growth" noting Massachusetts' "intellectual capital" and "dynamic economy."

"We must invest in education, training, and workforce development to stay ahead," he said. "We must also promote research and innovation in industries like alternative energy and nanotechnology that will grow our economy, create jobs, and have a positive impact on our environment."