

# 7-Eleven adult magazine ban lauded

By Joanne Maliszowski  
staff writer

Sherrie Stewart of Farmington Hills believes the corporate decision to ban the sale of adult magazines at 7-Eleven stores is an example of how concerned people can make a difference even with a multi-million corporation.

"Given the size of 7-Eleven (owned by the Dallas-based Southland Corp.), I think it is significant they have withdrawn the magazines because an awful lot of people must have responded," said Stewart, local spokeswoman and member of the Mississippi-based National Federation of Decency.

In mid-March Stewart and three other residents joined the federation's annual picketing of 7-Eleven stores in opposition to the sale of what they believe is soft pornography. Locally, residents picketed the

7-Eleven store at 29318 Orchard Lake in Farmington Hills. Last week, however, the Southland Corp. announced that its more than 4,000 chain stores around the country would no longer sell adult magazines after the current May issues have been sold.

"I'm thrilled. I am really thrilled," Stewart said. "It's just incredible to me that they did it."

DAN NOVAK, manager of the Orchard Lake 7-Eleven store — picketed in March — declined to comment this week on whether whether the store planned to follow Southland Corp. officials' decision to ban adult magazines.

But Stewart credits the decency federation and similar groups, such as Rev. Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority, for putting enough pressure

on the national corporation to force it to ban the sale of magazines such as Playboy, Penthouse and Hustler.

The federation targeted 7-Eleven stores for annual picketing because it has been one of the largest chains in the country selling adult magazines, Stewart said.

Although Stewart charged that based on federation information, 7-Eleven makes \$30 million in profit annually from the sale of adult magazines, a Southland Corp. spokesman disagreed.

"I don't know where they would get that because we don't release that kind of information," said Doug Reed, Southland Corp. spokesman.

THE SALE of periodicals does not contribute that greatly to the company's overall profit, he said in March.

Even though Southland Corp. officials have decided to ban the sale of adult magazines, Stewart intends to carry on her fight against what she considers both soft and hard pornography.

"I think Americans are trying to let just the whole realm of entertainment and media know that they have had enough. They (Americans) really want to go back to a more moral form of entertainment," Stewart said.

"People are beginning to sense the correlation between what entertainment projects as the moral norm with the disintegration of their family relationships, teen-age pregnancy, violent acts and crime," she continued.

While Stewart maintains that other stores follow 7-Eleven's former policy of keeping adult magazines behind counters out-of-sight, she nonetheless plans to talk with store owners about following the national chain's lead in removing the magazines.

AND SHE'S convinced that concerned people can make a difference if they demand change. Addresses of corporations, television producers and other decision makers in the entertainment world can be obtained from the decency federation by writing to P.O. Drawer 2440, Tupelo, Miss. 38803.

Acknowledging it's easier to contact store owners and managers, Stewart would also like to see the public put similar pressure on producers of television, video and cable TV shows and music. "People responsible for programming — we're getting their values. But we are not seeing what we want to see," she said.

Stewart maintains that teen-age consumers are the ones whom a lot of entertainment and advertising is geared toward. "People responsible for products have realized they can make a lot of money off teen-agers," she charged.

Armed with facts she has gathered through various publications, including the federation's journal, Stewart

maintains that 70 percent of all pornographic material is eventually read by children.

Stewart acknowledges a difference between what she considers soft pornography (Playboy and Penthouse) and hard pornography — the type of books and films found in most adult book stores. The sale of soft pornography concerns Stewart as much as hard pornography, however.

WHAT REALLY concerns Stewart is the effect pornography has on the reader and consequently the rest of society. For example, she maintained, pornography contributes to child abuse and child prostitution.

Referring to information provided by a Utah psychologist, Stewart believes pornography generally leads to people acting out what they see in magazines.

"Pornography and its components are so pervasive. Pornography is polluting our environment," she said.



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