

Plans are developed to raise funds, recruit volunteers to find Jennifer

By GLENN CHAPMAN
ADVANCE STAFF WRITER

Jennifer Schweiger's father yesterday joined about 20 concerned Staten Island residents in Holy Family R.C. Church for a brainstorming session that resulted in plans to raise funds and recruit thousands of volunteers to expand the hunt for the missing girl.

Meanwhile, police yesterday continued to search the Staten Island Developmental Center (SIDC) in Willowbrook and the Farm Colony in Sea View for some trace of the girl.

Jennifer has Down's syndrome and congenital heart disease. She was last seen on a street near her home three weeks ago. Police relying on witnesses and a blood hound followed the girl's trail to the developmental center. According to investigators, there is currently no evidence to indicate the girl was taken off Staten Island.

The meeting held yesterday was the start of a program to heighten community awareness of potential dangers to children, as well as establish avenues of pursuit in the search for the missing 12-year-old Westerleigh girl.

"We have been reactive," Fran Daly said of the response to the girl's disappearance. "Now, the community wants to be proactive."

Plans included seeking permis-

sion from city agencies to have posters of the missing girl placed in city buses, parks, train stations, ferry terminals and on the ferry boats.

According to the Rev. Henry Gentile, efforts will be made to unite all Island houses of worship in an effort to raise funds for the search and bring out volunteers to help find Jennifer.

"Every day Jennifer came (to church) she gave us a big hug and kiss," Father Gentile said. "We want it to be known that this is a drive for Jennifer, and everyone's child."

Members of the group also worked on plans to institute a "neighborhood watch" that would have community residents maintaining a lookout for strangers or suspicious activity.

Volunteers yesterday continued to search the Farm Colony and wooded lots in Westerleigh.

According to Francis Auriti of Oakwood, who attended the meeting, efforts are also being made to expand the search to the South Shore.

Anyone interested in joining the effort to find Jennifer can meet with volunteers in the Holy Family Church parking lot at 366 Watchogue Rd. daily at noon or 7 p.m. Anyone with information about the missing girl can contact police at a 24-hour hotline number, 447-4168.

A \$5,000 reward is being offered for information leading to the safe

return of the girl and the conviction of anyone who may have been involved with her disappearance, according to Donna Cutugno of the Friends of Jennifer. People wishing to contribute to an effort to increase the reward and establish a fund to be used in the event any other Island children suffer a similar fate can send donations to The Jennifer Schweiger Fund, P.O. Box 961, Staten Island, N.Y. 10314.