

Smokescreen

Former Winston Man speaks candidly about tobacco industry

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Former Winston cigarette model Dave Goerlitz may be best remembered for the "Search and Rescue" series of print ads he was featured in during the 1980s. The advertisements portrayed Goerlitz as a macho, cigarette smoking, tough guy, scaling mountains and flying airplanes.

Nearly two decades later the New Jersey native finds himself on a very different recovery mission. Today he publicly speaks out against an industry that he says paid him more than \$100,000 a year to "entice, encourage and lure kids to smoke."

Goerlitz's stand against the multi-billion dollar tobacco industry started in 1988 when he publicly quit smoking — ending an addiction that led him to smoke 3-1/2 packs a day for more than 20 years.

"I was a professional smoker," said Goerlitz, "who was paid a lot of money to get men smoking... particularly young boys. The

marketing made smoking look good because I looked macho, tough, robust and virile in the ads."

Goerlitz's frank anti-tobacco comments were made to an audience of approximately 200 students from throughout Wayne County at the "My Mind Is Free, No Tobacco For Me!" conference sponsored by the Wayne County Smoking and Tobacco Intervention Coalition and more than a dozen agencies and organizations including Hagira Prevention, St. Mary Hospital, Oakwood Hospital, the Wayne County Sheriff's Department and the Karmans Cancer Institute.

Appearing as the keynote speaker at the all-day conference in River Rouge, Goerlitz fast-paced 40 minute presentation emphasized the manipulative role he believes he promoted as the Winston Man. "I was paid to create illusions. I'm an actor — I did a good job."

Goerlitz says his job was to find replacement smokers for those who either quit or died from a smoking-related illness. "The tobacco industry doesn't



Model: Dave Goerlitz, also known as the Winston Man.

sell cigarettes for brand loyalty," said Goerlitz, but for profit. "The ads are deliberate lies about the real value of their product."

During his stint as the Winston Man, he was featured in 42 advertisements (more than any other tobacco model including the "Marlboro Man") during

which time R.J. Reynolds brand Winston cigarettes moved from number four to number two in worldwide sales.

Currently Goerlitz makes his living addressing young people and adults at public speaking engagements, conferences, smoking cessation programs, through videos and on his Web site by promoting his anti-tobacco message. On the road for approximately 240 days a year, Goerlitz estimates he appears at some 400 events annually.

The former model says his 11 year quest has been fueled by his desire to "undo the damage that his ads may have done in addicting young people to a product."

"I'm ashamed of what I did," said Goerlitz as he reflects upon his work for the R.J. Reynolds company. The 48-year-old father and grandfather has other modeling and movie credits to be proud of despite the unfavorable impression he's left with as the former Winston Man.

Goerlitz appeared as Harrison Ford's stand-in in the movie "Witness" and worked on such film productions as "Eddie and

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Dave Goerlitz
—Former Winston model

the Cruisers," "Rocky II," "Striking Back," and "Last Exit to Brooklyn." He has been featured in commercials for The Adolph Coors Company, Vanderbilt Swan Perfume, Fayva Shoes and more.

A little help

It was his son who motivated him to kick his cigarette habit. "That kid meant business," said Goerlitz, "and my quitting reinforced him to not start." That, coupled with a minor stroke he suffered while working on "Witness," left him with a lack of feeling on the left side of his body and the inability to taste foods. The medical emergency served as an important wake-up call.

Despite the seriousness of his

message, Goerlitz couples humor with anecdotal stories from his upbringing in an effort to connect with the students about tobacco use whether it's cigarettes, Bidis (flavored cigarettes), chewing tobacco or cigars.

"Tobacco is tobacco. Just like garbage is garbage," said Goerlitz. "Advertising of tobacco is a huge problem and it's a bunch of lies. It's not one thing that gets kids to smoke but many things."

Dave Goerlitz recently completed a book titled, "Behind the Smokescreen," a chronicle of his life beginning with his first smoking experience at the age of 13. For more information visit his Web site at <http://davegoerlitz.findhere.com>

MEDICAL DATEBOOK

Items for Medical Datebook are welcome from all hospitals, physicians, companies and residents active in the Observer-area medical community. Items should be sent to: Medical Datebook, c/o The Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, e-mail: kmortson@oe.hometown.com or faxed to (734) 591-7279.

SUN, AUG. 8

CHEMICAL SENSITIVITY
Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Friends is a free support group for anyone who is hypersensitive to chemical and/or environmental irritants such as smoke, fragrances, pesticides, cleaning supplies and new construction materials. Informal monthly meetings are held in various locations. Group will gather for a picnic at Island Lake State Park (near Kensington Lake) from 2-5 p.m. Call for

directions (248) 349-4972.

MON, AUG. 9

SAFE SITTER CLASS

The Marian Women's Center at St. Mary Hospital will offer a Safe Sitter Class for young people ages 11-13 on Monday, Aug. 9 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Wednesday, Aug. 11 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Safe Sitter is a medically-accurate instruction series that teaches boys and girls aged 11-13 how to handle emergencies when caring for young children. The program includes basic lifesaving techniques, safety precautions to prevent accidents, how and when to summon help and tips on basic child care. Cost of the class is \$40 per student. Registration is requested. Call (734) 655-1100 or (800) 494-1815.

TUE, AUG. 10

STOP SMOKING

If you're ready to kick the tobacco habit, St. Mary Hospital has the class for you. The four-session Smoke-Free Living Class will be offered from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Tuesdays, from August 10 through August 31, in Pavilion Conference Room A. The Smoke-Free Living Class is a four-week program to help individuals quit smoking. The class covers the effects of smoking, what to expect when you quit, coping techniques and strategies on staying smoke-free. The program is designed to give you the tools, confidence and support you need to eliminate your smoking habit. The \$25 fee includes all materials and is covered by some insurances. Registration is required. Call (734) 655-8940.

WED, AUG. 11

WOMEN'S HEALTH

This informative free series is presented by Bharti Srivastava, M.D., senior health specialist. Group meets from 1-2 p.m. at the Canton Summit on the Park, 46000 Summit Parkway, Canton, Call (734) 397-5444.

THUR, AUG. 12

WEIGHT CONTROL

A weight loss seminar occurs 3-5 p.m. and 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Providence Medical Center on Seven Mile at Newburgh in Livonia. The first 45 minutes is free. The last 75 minutes cost \$59 and includes hypnosis, a home reinforcement audio tape and unlimited free repetitions of the seminar. Call (877) 345-6500 for reservations.

WEIGHT CONTROL

The Mission Health Medical Center in Livonia will host a weight control class from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Aug. 12. This program combines behavior modification techniques with the power of self-hypnosis to help change your way of thinking regarding weight loss. First forty-five minutes is a free orientation. \$59. Call (877) 345-6500 to register.

SAT, AUG. 14

BREAST CANCER

Admission is free to the "International Betty Ford Breast Cancer Symposium for the Patient" 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 14, at the University of Michigan Cancer Center in Ann Arbor. Speakers from medical centers will discuss prevention, nutrition, complemen-

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