

# SAN JOSE NEWS

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## Doctor seeking support for anti-smoking drive

By Bob Golligowski  
Staff Writer

Dr. Alan Blum's idea of a perfect day would be watching the finals of the Emphysema Slims Tennis Tournament, driving by a billboard advising smokers that cigarettes contain arsenic and later watching a sexy young woman on television proclaim, "I taste better without cigarettes."

Blum, a 31-year-old Chicago doctor, is president of DOC, a three-year-old national organization that stands for Docs Ought to Care.

DOC, says Blum, aims to educate the public "in refreshing and innovative ways about the major preventable factors leading to high medical costs and bad health.

"These are mainly the killer habits of smoking, drinking booze, drug abuse, fast driving and teen-age pregnancy. Our target groups are primarily teen-agers and children."

Blum was in the Bay area recently to drum up support for DOC, an organization he helped start. Some 1,000 doctors and other health professionals already have either contributed to DOC or participated in its educational activities.

Not much has been heard yet about DOC in California. Its strongest and most controversial ventures have taken place in Florida and South Carolina.

In Florida, DOC has bought advertising space on bus benches for its humorous and sometimes devastating parodies of cigarette advertising.

While a conventional billboard message extolls the virtues of Decade — "the taste that took 10 years to make," DOC's bus bench across the street displays a cigarette pack with the advisory, "Emphysema — the disease that took 10 years to make."

"We tried to buy billboard space in Miami but couldn't," said Blum. "When half of your billboard revenue comes from cigarette advertising and one-fourth from alcohol, you don't want to risk losing that by selling space urging people not to buy those products."

DOC uses Madison Avenue advertising techniques in its counter advertising.

In a series of television messages, a voluptuous young thing with a partially unbuttoned shirt gushes excitedly that "I taste better without cigarettes."

DOC has published a poster of a hairy-chested macho model with a cigarette up his nose. The caption: "I smoke for smell."

As a take-off on the Virginia Slims Tennis Tournament, DOC plans to sponsor an "Emphysema Slims Tennis Championship" soon in Miami.

If cigarette manufacturers

are going to use what Blum describes as "insidious and manipulative techniques," why can't DOC.

DOC's budget is miniscule compared to that of the cigarette industry.

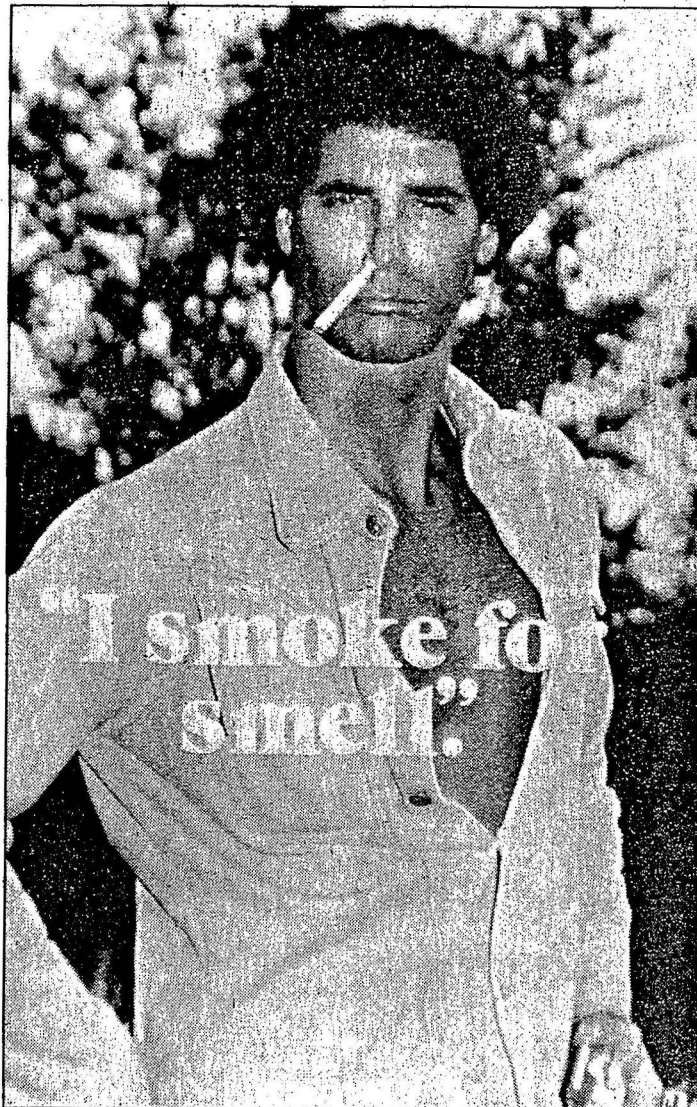
"The industry," noted Blum, "spends more than \$1.5 billion a day (on advertising and promotion). That's more than the federal Office on Smoking and Health spends in a year. DOC has raised \$20,000 to \$30,000 in the last three years.

"To my knowledge, DOC is the only tax-exempt, nonprofit group of its kind anywhere that selectively purchases prime media space for health messages right up alongside the cigarette, alcohol and junk food ads to tell the public how it really is."

Blum doesn't believe that traditional approaches aimed at curbing teenage smoking have been very effective. The idea of illness to an adolescent who feels fine at the time is abstract.

"DOC doesn't believe," he said, "that an emphasis on the physical effects of smoking is the most appropriate way to tackle the adolescent cigarette epidemic.

"Rather, we contend that adolescent preferences (as in music, magazines and fashion crazes) in our community and elsewhere coincide with the motivating techniques used in cigarette advertisements."



Poster of a hairy-chested macho model with a cigarette up his nose carries a pungent message