



David Hertog, pictured in downtown Palatine, has worked as a private investigator for 14 years. (Richard Mayer/The Journal)

# Gaining Ground

Private Investigator Helps Businesses Keep From Hiring 'The Wrong People'

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Fremd High School graduate David Hertog works these days as a private investigator and owns his own company based in Barrington.

Hertog, 52, has owned Hertog & Associates for 14 years and his company is considered an award winning licensed private detective agency.

In 2003, his company was awarded "Business of the Year" from the Rolling Meadows Chamber of Commerce.

"We obtain hard to find or get information such as financial, premarital and business background," said Hertog. "We do background investigations, surveillance, and competitive intelligence gathering."

According to Hertog, anyone going into a business deal with a company may want to find out more about that firm and its executives ahead of time. That is when he would be hired.

"We also help keep clients from hiring the wrong people," he said. "You would not want a convicted felon, for example, working in a sensitive area of a pharmaceutical company."

Hertog has also completed training in specialized weapons, kidnapping survival, hostage rescue, counterterrorism, threat assessments and workplace violence.

According to Hertog, he provides services anywhere but a majority of the time is in the Chicagoland area. Some of his clients have been from Palatine, Rolling Meadows, Elk Grove Village and other surrounding communities.

Hertog's company is also an investigative resource for the Korean-American and Polish-American communities.

Some of the bigger corporations Hertog has provided services to include Grainger, Harpo, Kraft Foods, Holland & Knight, Motorola, United Airlines and Waste Management.

A typical day for Hertog is not what most people expect, he said.

"It's not like television where they solve a case in an hour or two. I do feel privileged to work for business and private individual clients who trust me to assist them," said Hertog.

A recent workday for Hertog entailed waking up at 4 a.m. for a vehicle-based surveillance in the rain and cold near

Aurora lasting a good part of the day.

According to Hertog, the public finds his business useful and important.

"Majority of the time, you can develop and provide new information, which helps a business or private individual clients make critical business or life decisions," said Hertog.

After the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, calls for his service went up 20% because he said more people feel vulnerable and want to know how they can better protect themselves.

In addition to still having ties to the area through his profession, Hertog's father, Herman, was the first executive director of the Buehler YMCA in Palatine.

His father was selected as the executive and representative for the area and asked to meet with members of the community who had expressed interest in having a YMCA in the area.

Hertog said his father was responsible for fundraising, budgeting, planning and construction.

"My clients know their story is not going to end up on CNN," added Hertog. "I am a private detective and investigator and privacy is the key."