

ON THE BILL

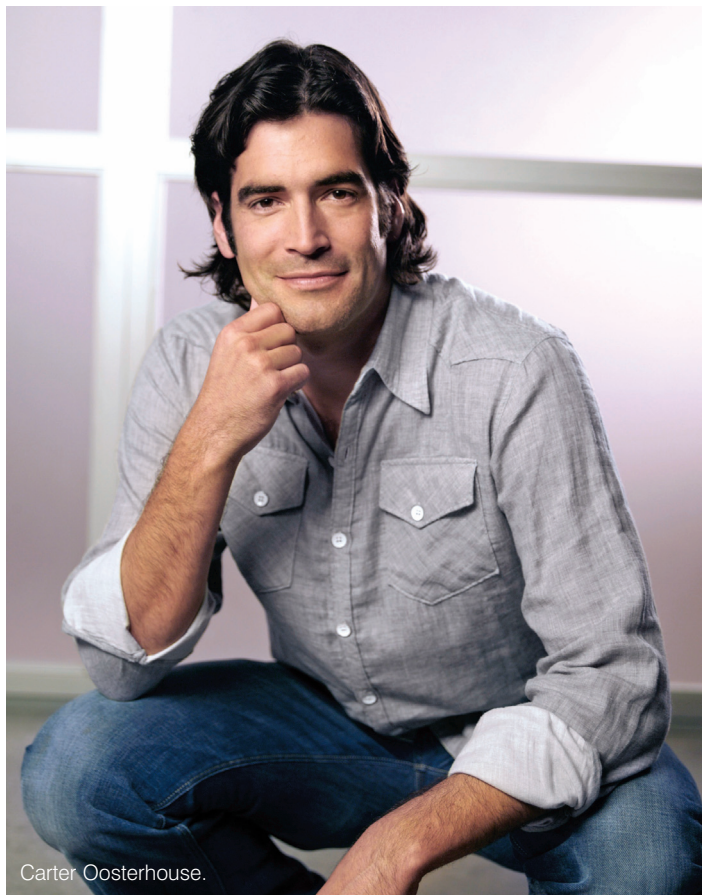
THE BIG PICTURE


ecofile

TELEVISION PERSONALITY and carpenter Carter Oosterhouse was recently in Washington, DC, for the HGTV “Change the World, Start at Home” campaign. The network, along with its nonprofit partners (Rebuilding Together, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Natural Resources Defense Council) and hundreds of volunteers, chose to revitalize neighborhoods and green spaces in five cities. Washington, DC, was one of the fortunate few, and Oosterhouse was more than happy to spend some time here. “I think Washington, DC, is wonderful,” he says. “The mix of historic architecture and modern buildings is amazing.”

Oosterhouse is not your average tree-hugger. The host of *Carter Can* (entering its second season on HGTV), DYT’s *The Inside Job*, and *Red, Hot & Green*, an HGTV series that premiered in June, the strapping 6-foot-2 Mexican-American—once *People* magazine’s “Sexiest Man on TV” and currently the face of Nautica’s Sunset and Sunset Voyage colognes—is rapidly becoming the new Pied Piper of the “mainstream” environmental movement, leading viewers to greener pastures. His popularity rests on a philosophy that is gentle, not militant. Though he has been criticized by radical conservationists for his “do what you can” approach, Oosterhouse creates manageable steps to an eco-friendly lifestyle, ideal for a time-strapped public, and stresses that change does not come easily. “I get frustrated when I see people getting upset with others because they don’t do everything eco-friendly,” says Oosterhouse. “It’s all about baby steps.”

He urges America to “conserve energy usage,” a mantra that he admits is “not breakthrough stuff.” But Oosterhouse is not afraid to employ repetition in order to remind people that simple changes can have a big impact. In a world full of distractions and noise, “it’s constant conditioning,” he says.



Carter Oosterhouse.

Not Your Average Tree-Hugger

Carter Oosterhouse’s passion for eco-living—not to mention his rugged good looks—has given him rock-star status in a country ripe for change.

BY CHERYL WOODCOCK

for all things green in Hollywood. Oosterhouse recently helped secure sustainable furnishings for the organization’s new offices in Los Angeles and has been asked to serve on the newly formed “Young Hollywood” board chaired by actress and longtime environmentalist Amy Smart.

With the rare opportunity to blend his passion for the environment with a thriving career, Oosterhouse seems at once content and ever mindful of his unique place in the spotlight. “I am grateful to be surrounded by family and friends,” he says. “It helps me keep the right frame of mind.” ★

With his energy, charm, and model good looks, Oosterhouse’s rise to fame seemed destined. Growing up in Traverse City, Michigan, the youngest in a large and close-knit Catholic family, Oosterhouse earned his degree in nutrition from Central Michigan University and made his way to Los Angeles soon afterward to pursue an acting career.

A carpenter by trade, Oosterhouse auditioned for the home makeover show *Trading Spaces*, then entering its fourth season. He was immediately cast as a replacement for exiting carpenter Ty Pennington, and the media fell in love with him. Magazine writers drooled over his camera-ready grin, Oprah Winfrey came calling, and the carpenter-turned-TV star began making regular visits to NBC’s *Today* show. Oosterhouse also worked double duty as cohost of the short-lived but highly rated NBC primetime reality show *Three Wishes* with Grammy Award-winning singer Amy Grant.

Oosterhouse is quick to pay homage to those who’ve been there from the beginning. “Ed Begley Jr. is a true pioneer of the green movement,” he says. “There are a lot of people in Hollywood who say they are doing something and are not truly involved. I have the luxury of actually practicing it and putting it on TV.” In addition to his day job, Carter is working closely with the Environmental Media Association, the gold standard