

May your holidays be happy & gay!

north
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CAROLINA

QNotes

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Q-Living:
Holiday recollections



Ford proves they're not 'built for the road ahead'

Leading American auto manufacturer turns its back on LGBT community

by David Moore
Q-Notes staff

During the first week of December Ford Motor Company began notifying gay media outlets that it was canceling all ads for Jaguar and Land Rover but would continue — at least for now — to run ads for Volvo. The company owns all three brands.

The ultra-conservative, anti-gay organization American Family Association (AFA) immediately claimed that it was in response to their seven-month boycott of the company — though representatives at Ford Motor Company in Dearborn, Mich. initially denied the claims.

"Jaguar and Land Rover have been streamlining marketing and making reductions across the board," Ford spokesman Michael Moran told the *Baltimore Sun*. "The decisions on advertising were made for business reasons and not as a social statement one way or the other."

Given the history of the company with LGBT consumers and employees the move seemed particularly strident — an action received with disbelief by LGBT advocacy organization the Human Rights Campaign, which immediately released a statement: "Ford has been a friend to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender consumers and employees in the past, and through its policies and advertising it has shown support for fairness."

Indeed, Ford has a proven track record that began with the formation of a gay and lesbian employee group — Ford GLOBE — in late 1994.

Since the mid-1990s, on both a local and national level, Ford has advertised in LGBT publications and frequently supported gay events.

By 1998 Ford formally added a non-discrimination policy that included sexual orientation to their employment policy. In 2000 they announced domestic partnership benefits, followed by the addition of gender identity to their employment policy in 2004.

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) awarded Ford with a score of 100 in 2004 when it released its list of "Best Companies for Gay Employees."

"This rating acknowledges Ford's deep commitment to building and nurturing an inclusive and respectful culture in which all employees feel encouraged, and able, to contribute to their fullest potential," said Jim Padilla, chief operating officer and chairman of automotive operations at Ford Motor Co.

"Not only is this the right thing to do, it is essential to the future of our business."

In reaction to the Ford's gay-positive



Deal with the devil: AFA's Donald Wildmon (left) reportedly brokered a deal with Ford representatives Ziad Ojakli (center) and David Leitch to stop sponsorships of all LGBT-related events and pull ads from gay media.

stance, AFA announced a boycott of the company in late May, 2005.

Said AFA Chairman Donald Wildmon: "From redefining family to include homosexual marriage, to giving hundreds of thousands of dollars to support homosexual groups and their agenda, to forcing man-

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Are you leaving town for the holidays?
. yes . no

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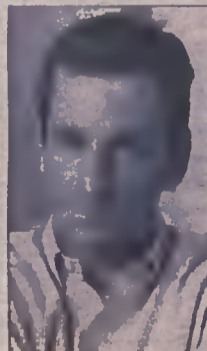
Statistics show bullying is a 'serious problem' for N.C. students

by Riley Snorton

NEW YORK, N.Y. — The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) released on Dec. 6 its "From Teasing to Torment: A Profile of School Climate in North Carolina," which provides a rare look into students' experiences with bullying and harassment as well as their attitudes about this serious problem. The results are based on students in N.C. who were surveyed as part of a national study of secondary school students and teachers conducted by Harris Interactive.

Results from the survey demonstrate that bullying is far too common in N.C. schools:

- Nearly half of all N.C. students thought that bullying was a somewhat or serious problem in their schools and were 33 percent more likely to say it was a somewhat or serious problem than see N.C. on 15



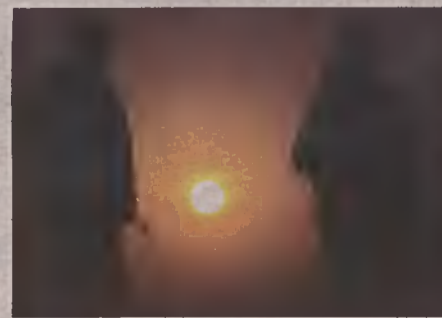
'It is time to listen to our students and teachers and make some changes in North Carolina schools.' — GLSEN founder and N.C. native Kevin Jennings

Notes from a gay soldier

Seasons Greetings From Iraq

Editor's Note: These are the thoughts of a gay soldier — a North Carolina native — who has been deployed to Iraq. Because of the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, he must remain anonymous.

While I'm thinking about Christmas and family and friends back home — things are getting really dangerous over here. Life in



Iraq has gotten a bit worse since my last column. I have lost two interpreters as a result of the ongoing conflict.

As they left the camp to go home on a break, they were attacked. That day was sad. These guys

become your friend and are your allies to communicate effectively. There have been also at least a half dozen soldiers from my camp alone that have perished. Small arms fire is increasing daily in the area, there are see NOTES on 17