



editor's note

by matt comer
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Naughty and Nice

Santa Claus is coming to town! And, he's bringing switches and lumps of coal for some of the state's meanest and most heartless anti-gay villains. At the same time, there's plenty of folks in need of rewarding. No doubt, sugarplums and other delicious treats will await them in their stockings Christmas morn.

Here now is *qnotes'* 2011 Naughty and Nice List.

Naughty State Rep. Dale Folwell

Near the top of this year's Naughty List sits Forsyth County Republican and state House Speaker Pro Tem Dale Folwell. Folwell led the push this year — even more so than its traditional cheerleader, the late state Sen. James Forrester, R-Gaston — for an anti-LGBT state constitutional amendment banning marriage, civil unions and domestic partnerships for same-sex couples. As if Folwell's mere outspoken support for the amendment wasn't enough, he threw gasoline onto the fire when he invited anti-gay pastors into the press room of the North Carolina General Assembly. There, state media gathered, Folwell stood with pride as the pastors lambasted LGBT people with some of the most extreme homophobic language the legislature has ever heard.

State Rep. Paul Stam

Folwell wasn't alone in his push this year for the anti-LGBT amendment. Standing shoulder-to-shoulder with Folwell and Forrester was House Majority Leader Paul Stam, R-Wake. But, it's not Stam's support of the amendment that lands him on this year's Naughty List. Instead, it's the exceedingly arrogant and nonchalant manner in which Stam behaved on the floor of the House during debate on the measure — a provision that would drastically alter our state's most important governing document. Leaning back in his chair, relaxed and with a smirk on his face, Stam proceeded to pop pieces of popcorn into

his mouth while Democrats tried desperately to plead for common sense and caution. Such disrespectful behavior is unbecoming a public servant of this great state and its citizens. That act alone warranted resignation, but I doubt we'll ever see that. Arrogance, after all, makes for a great bedfellow with ego. I doubt Stam will be giving up his status too soon, though I'll have to just keep crossing my fingers. In the meantime, I'll just take solace in knowing the bigger (ass) you are, the harder you'll fall.

Nice Alex Miller

After the summer departure of longtime Equality North Carolina Executive Director Ian Palmquist, the group's former contract lobbyist, Alex Miller, was tapped to shepherd the organization until a more permanent replacement could be found. Miller took on the role with phenomenal style and strength, setting the pace and tone of Equality North Carolina's courageous fight against the Republican-led legislature's push for the anti-LGBT amendment. Perhaps, Miller's most brilliant moment came in his joint interview with Folwell on WFAE's "Charlotte Talks" with host Mike Collins. After being called out by Folwell for calling opponents of marriage equality "bigots," Miller didn't skip a beat.

"You invited some pastors to come to the Legislative Building and speak from the podium which is paid for in part by the tax dollars of LGBT North Carolinians and those pastors have been quoted as saying... variously, that gay and lesbian North Carolinians are not 'gay.' That we've got to use terms like 'deviant' and 'abomination' and that homosexuality is a 'death-style.' That's Patrick Wooden from Raleigh who you invited to come speak from the General Assembly and you stood next time as he spoke."

Miller continued, "Another person you invited has been quoted talking about churches

that are open and affirming to gay and lesbian people and he said, 'Faggots across the nation heading churches. Homos on the pianos. Faggots in the choir. What kind of spirit is that leading the church?' and about politicians who oppose this amendment, 'They want that little one percent of faggots to go vote.' You might not be a bigot but that is bigoted language and you invited that into the General Assembly Building that is paid for by tax dollars including the tax dollars of gay and lesbian North Carolinians, so either you agree with them and you are a bigot or you don't agree with them — and you invited them for political purposes and honestly I'm not sure which is worse."

Equality North Carolina

Miller might have been the face and voice of Equality North Carolina during the legislative phase of its fight against the anti-LGBT amendment, but there's no doubt he couldn't have done it without the ever-present, hard-working and intelligent staffers behind him. Development Director Kay Flaminio, Administrative Assistant Shawn Long, Communications Director Jen Jones, Director of Community Organizing Sam Parker and Human Rights Campaign staffers Jess Osborne, Chris Speer and Karin Quimby were just a handful among the many, many staff people, volunteers, donors and activists who helped to guide Equality North Carolina through this year's legislative session. Though the amendment still passed, it did so with just one vote. That's a testament to Equality North Carolina's strength and influence, which we hope continues to play a defining role as the Coalition to Protect NC Families rolls forward into the ballot initiative campaign. ::

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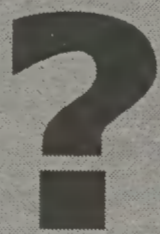
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Thank you!

316
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