



Who'da thunk? 2010's new indoor smoking ban brings the North Carolina's centuries-long love affair with tobacco to its knees.

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networking, loathed or cherished, is here to stay. "Experts" warn of a different sort of threat in 2010 to sites like Facebook and Twitter: hackers. Both sites have grown so large and so popular they've become sitting ducks for shadowy computer brainiacs with too much time on their hands.

As for changing trends, which new social media site will be the new champ? Last

January, social networking gurus predicted Facebook would overtake MySpace. They were right. Will Facebook die a slow, painful death? Will Twitter lose ground to FourSquare? Only time will tell.

On a more local and regional note, you can expect to see greater cooperation between hyperlocal blogs and news sites — like QCityMetro.com and DavidsonNews.

net — and daily giant *Charlotte Observer*. Recently announced, the *Observer* will utilize thousands in grant dollars to fund partnerships with a wide range of neighborhood and community websites. According to the *Observer*, similar partnerships are underway with the *Asheville Citizen-Times* and local blogs and websites in the Blue Ridge.

Let's hope 2010 treats LGBT media more fairly than 2009. After the collapse of gay news giant Window Media, the employees of the former *Washington Blade*, *Southern Voice* and *South Florida Blade* are working hard to recreate new publications for their communities. *Blade* staff have teamed up to create the already-successful *DC Agenda*. Atlantans will see a 2010 competition between the new *ATL Free Press* and *Southern Voice* staff-led *GA Voice*.

You can expect competition in Ft. Lauderdale, too. After the publishers of *Mark's List Magazine* took former *Florida Blade* staffers under their wings and produced some of the first print editions of their new *Florida Agenda*, *Miami Herald* reporter Steve Rothaus said Norm Kent, original publisher of the now defunct *Express Gay News*, is starting his new *South Florida Gay News*. Kent says an online edition will debut first, with 12,000 print edition issues being produced this month. ::

Next issue: Spring A&E Guide

Be sure to pick up *qnotes* Jan. 23 print issue for our look into spring's upcoming arts and entertainment offerings.

Fit for a queen



Join the Blumenthal Center for Performing Arts for the one-day, Jan. 12 appearance of the Band of the Irish Guards and Royal Regiment of Scotland. Formed in 1900, the band includes various ensembles including a concert band, marching band, fanfare trumpeters and more. They'll perform both traditional folk tunes and other familiar songs. Go ahead, boys...play on for Queen Charlotte!

For ticketing information, visit BlumenthalCenter.org. ::

— compiled by *qnotes* staff



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