



editor's note

by matt comer
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A New Year for change and growth

Three... two... one... Happy New Year! Yes, it's time for well wishes, resolutions and new beginnings. I do it. You do it. We all partake in the annual wish-making and dreaming that is New Year. With a new calendar comes hopes for change, progress and success. And, as much as we each wish better for ourselves, here's to new hopes that our community and world experiences better days as well.

2011 was a rocky year. Bad news seemed constant. The economy was and remains in shambles. Politicians and civic leaders seem deadlocked in constant disagreement. Dysfunction abounds. Despite it all, our community saw its fair share of successes last year — accomplishments I hope we can build on for bigger and brighter goals in 2012, a year that will prove historic for Charlotte and North Carolina.

Our city's and state's LGBT communities

will be handed a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to shine on a national and world stage this year — the highlights, of course, being the impending anti-LGBT constitutional amendment vote in May and this September's Democratic National Convention in Charlotte.

In the next few months, the campaign to defeat the proposed amendment — which would forever ban recognition of same-sex marriages, civil unions and domestic partnerships — will heat up. Both sides will begin fundraising ferociously (if they haven't already) and TV ads, radio spots, billboards, yard signs and mailers will soon become as commonplace as the Carolina pine trees that stand tall in nearly every single backyard in this state.

The amendment will be an uphill fight. Thirty states across the country have passed similar constitutional measures, though North Carolina's is one of the most draconian.

Fortunately, Tar Heels have a long, progressive tradition and history to draw upon, giving us a firm foundation for building coalitions and working toward the defeat of the amendment. And, regardless of the amendment's eventual fate, the organizing and grassroots work undertaken will leave an indelible mark on LGBT communities in every single city and town, no matter their size.

This fall, LGBT community members in Charlotte — and even those across the state — will have the opportunity to engage in a conversation that could prove useful for creating more progressive and inclusive movement at the local level. Thousands and thousands of LGBT and LGBT-friendly politicians, activists, lobbyists, Democratic Party workers and media representatives will pour into the Queen City for the 2012 Democratic National Convention and become our captive audience.

For the week the convention is here, and for the several weeks preceding it, local LGBT community leaders and members will meet and mingle with some of the nation's most influential LGBT leaders and visionaries. Such access, I hope, will serve as a boon to efforts to increase our visibility and credibility as an active, politically and socially dynamic constituency.

I sincerely hope my fellow community leaders will take this opportunity and use it for its maximum potential benefit. A wasted opportunity such as this would be quite sad, indeed. I envision speaking engagements and leadership discussions and public projects and initiatives to increase our visibility. We all know our community is culturally vibrant — now it is our turn to become politically dynamic and viable. We've been ignored for far too long, hidden away in the Queen City's dusty closet.

Our community's continued journey out of Charlotte's proverbial closet is, perhaps, my most ardent and heartfelt wish for our local community this new year. We had a glimpse of the possibilities during Pride Charlotte's Uptown 27,000-plus extravaganza in August. We are a large and powerful community — but only if we choose to be, such as recent efforts to engage the Charlotte City Council in continued conversations on a non-discrimination ordinance and domestic partner benefits.

Pride Charlotte's 2011 theme — "Stand Up. Stand Out. Stand Proud" — was perfectly symbolic and it's a message we should take to heart as this new year unfolds and we begin to face the amendment's challenges and Democratic Convention's many blessings. : :



general gayety

by leslie robinson
qnotes contributor

Helping out on the resolution front

I've taken the liberty of composing New Year's resolutions for individuals who are just too busy to do it themselves.

Newt Gingrich:

1. Lose weight.
2. Win the Republican nomination.
3. Win the presidential election.
4. Gloat.

Mitt Romney:

1. Win the Republican nomination.
2. Win the presidential election.
3. Sentence Newt Gingrich to Devil's Island.

Herman Cain:

1. Land a gig on Fox.
2. See a marriage counselor with Gloria.
3. Find a new piece of chicken on the side.

Rick Santorum:

1. Lose the Republican nomination.
2. Sulk.

Michele Bachmann:

1. Win the Republican nomination.
2. If that fails, angle for the vice-presidential nomination.
3. Confront Marcus once and for all.
4. Introduce legislation removing all gay people to Key West — at least Marcus will be warm.

Marcus Bachmann:

1. Reconcile my faith, my orientation and my choices.
2. Not.

Rick Perry:

1. Burn the jacket I wore in the antigay video.
2. Remain firmly ignorant about everything.

Ron Paul:

1. Lose the Republican nomination.
2. Declare Houston a new libertarian nation.
3. Deny foreign aid to Dallas.

Jon Huntsman:

1. Come from behind, way behind, and win the

- Republican nomination.
- Failing that, accept a cabinet post — in the Obama administration.

Fred Karger:

1. Be denied entry to the Republican National Convention.
2. Lose the Republican nomination.
3. Start planning for 2016.

Sarah Palin:

1. Get Todd his own reality show on snowmobile racing.
2. Win the Arizona Senate seat.
3. See Russia from Scottsdale.

Donald Trump:

1. Convince the world I'm the most important person in it.

Barack Obama:

1. Recapture the White House.
2. Work on my place in history.
3. Resume smoking, no matter what Michelle says.

Michelle Obama:

1. Campaign like crazy.
2. Urge America to support Iraq veterans.
3. Rotate my crops.

Bo Obama:

1. Locate an irreplaceable White House antique and eat it.

John Boehner:

1. Do my part to get a Republican in the White House.
2. Perfect my tan so *Sports Illustrated* has to ask me to model in the swimsuit issue.

Barney Frank:

1. Serve effectively in Congress until my final term is finished.
2. Try not to laugh when people suggest I lead the HRC.

Tammy Baldwin:

1. Win Wisconsin's tough Senate race.
2. Publicly downplay that I'm the first openly gay U.S. Senator.
3. Privately tingle all over.

Angela Merkel:

1. Save the European Union.
2. Vacation anywhere but Greece.

Pope Benedict XVI:

1. Continue leading the Church backwards.
2. Convince God I'm too valuable to be called home.

Grethe Cammermeyer:

1. Make sure certain persons know I'm available to serve on the Joint Chiefs.

Steve Jobs:

1. Reveal to the world that my consciousness now resides in Apple's latest product, the

see *General Gayety* on 9

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