



LEROY BURNELL/STAFF

Visitors take a horse-and-carriage tour to enjoy the sights on Church Street.

## Celebrate city's top tourism honor

When Charleston made its debut on the Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards list of Top U.S. Cities with a sixth-place ranking in 1993, it was the first such recognition ever garnered by our destination. The accolade aligned Charleston with cosmopolitan cities like Chicago, New York and San Francisco, captured the attention of other national media and effectively welcomed the world to discover the area's many charms. Certainly our celebrated cuisine and dining scene, colorful history, beautiful beaches and engaging attractions are compelling draws for visitors.

Also inviting is the range of award-winning lodging options, including the eight Charleston area Condé Nast Traveler 2011 Readers' Choice Award-winning hotels — Charleston Place, French Quarter Inn, John Rutledge House Inn, Kiawah Island Golf Resort, Market Pavilion, Planters Inn, Wentworth Mansion and Wild Dunes. However, there is one attribute that truly sets the Lowcountry apart from all other places: the people.

Thanks to you, the smiling faces of the local hospitality industry and the genial residents credited with the Charleston area's reputation for friendliness and hospitality, the destination has accrued amazing accolades including Travel + Leisure 2011 World's Best Awards as the No. 2 Top City in the U.S. and Canada, Bon Appétit Best New Restaurant in America

2011, Outside Top Ten Best Town Ever, United States Tennis Association Best Tennis Town in the U.S. and, as of this week, Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards Top U.S. City.

One Charlestonian in particular helped make the Condé Nast Traveler 2011 Readers' Choice Awards gala memorable for everyone in attendance at the Edison Ballroom in New York on Oct. 10.

Emmy Award-winning comedy writer Stephen Colbert shared his personal connection to the Lowcountry as he presented the Top U.S. City Award to Charleston, and his remarks regarding his native home were both extremely funny and deeply touching. Stephen and his wife Evie are incredibly generous with their time, talent and treasure, and we say a special thank you to them.

To celebrate this most recent honor, the Charleston Area Convention and Visitors Bureau has launched CharlestONLY.com, a digital thank you card to the world. Please visit the site and accept our gratitude for all that you do to make the Charleston area such a special place for those of us who live here and the four million visitors we welcome every year.

HELEN T. HILL  
Executive Director  
Charleston Area Convention and Visitors Bureau  
King Street  
Charleston

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and institute democracy. The struggles from within. Does that sound familiar? Didn't our ancestors do something like that a few hundred years ago? If Obama's positions have influenced this process, should he not be "credited"?

Former President George Bush started wars to force democracy on tribal people who don't want it. I believe this was a very misguided attempt to stop terrorism — perhaps laudable in intent, but clearly fruitless. The Arab Spring uprisings have been the exact opposite. George Bush also had one monumental misconception about his role as president. He continually stated that he swore an oath to protect the people of the United States. He did not. He swore to protect the Constitution.

Would this country really elect a president who would ignore the Constitution in favor of the Christian Bible? Would we elect a president who would let her husband run the White House? Would we really elect a president who considers the extraordinarily well-documented theory of evolution to be false? Would we elect a president who insists that grass is purple and the sky is orange, simply because our current president says that grass is green and the sky is blue? Facts are facts, folks, and we ignore them at our peril. I think that "we the people" are smarter than that.

JEAN EVERETT, Ph.D.  
*Murphy's Court  
Charleston*

## Good luck, Garcia

I wish Stephen Garcia only the best in the future. I hope he will keep his faith and family close, and always keep his head up because he has a bright future.

He gave us many thrills on Saturday afternoons. On behalf of Gamecock Nation and the state of South Carolina, thank you. It has been a pleasure.

ASHLEY SUMMERS  
*Pickett Fence Lane  
Summerville*

## Incontinence help