

Opinions

Keeping current with Kenya crisis part of being world citizen

By Rebecca Clark
Pilot editor

I would like to take a moment to examine events taking place around the globe.

We often become so engaged in personal, "backyard things" that we tend to forget about the bigger picture. With the primaries taking place across the country, and candidates being whittled down to the

front runners, Americans are focused on our own political drama.

While this is a vital thing, and something we should all be involved in, there are other political issues around the world that are just as important.

Recent news paints a bleak picture of a crisis in a country far across the sea. Kenya has erupted into a storm of violence not seen since its fight for independence in

1963.

What began as a political protest against an election last month (one that many say was rigged) between President Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga, has evolved into an ethnic issue.

Kikuyus, (Kibaki's tribal people) are killing Luos, (Odinga's tribal people). It is Kenyan against Kenyan, and the death toll has risen to at least 800, with innocent civil-

ians being dragged into the conflict.

Two opposition lawmakers have been shot so far. Homes are being burned. People are clubbed to death, raped, shot. And a once-stable country is descending into chaos.

Former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan is trying to restore peace through talks between leaders. And current U.N. chief Ban Ki-

Moon has also met with both leaders to urge them to restore peace.

It is my hope that these mediators will be able to repair some of the damage and stability will be built up once again in Kenya.

As Americans, it is important to stay informed of events taking place on a national level. As citizens of the global community, we must be informed on an international level, as well.

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Wisdom on Wheels

Teamwork pays off in variety of ways for hoopsters

By Jacob Conley
Pilot sports editor

Kenny Rogers has many pearls of wisdom in his music. Pearls such as, "You got to know when to hold 'em and when to fold 'em."

In a lesser-known ballad, Rogers says, "Sometimes you got to fight when you're a man." These words came to me when I was watching the end of the men's basketball game against Florida Gulf Coast Jan. 26. GWU was trailing late in the game and tried to lengthen it by fouling, a tactic used in almost every college basketball game.

A GWU player tried to commit a foul, but none was called; the FCGU player took exception to it and de-

livered a forearm to the chest of GWU's player. A small skirmish ensued, but it was quickly resolved.

I normally don't condone that type of action on the basketball court, because it leaves a dark cloud over the game, but Gardner-Webb is a proud school with a proud basketball tradition.

We are not going to let arrogant punks and a whiney coach, who had already received one technical foul for complaining about a call, come in and push us around -- literally. I'm glad that our players showed a little pride in themselves and their school.

Now, I know all the religion majors reading this are clamoring to find the scrip-



Conley

ture reference in which Jesus said, "Turn the other cheek." But while you're doing that, read a little further in the gospel when Jesus cleared the money changers out of the temple with a horsehair whip. He did not want anyone defiling his father's house.

GWU players were acting with the same righteous anger. They did not want anyone defiling our house, the Paul Porter Arena.

Another encouraging thing I saw during that game was that we are a true team.

When one player faces adversity the other members are there to help him get through it.

This team has been through some hard times this season. I have not seen anyone put blame on another player or the coaching staff. That is the mark of a true team, one that will be successful regardless of its record.

And it is this teamwork that will eventually lead to a birth in the NCAA tournament this March.

Between now and March, however, I do have two suggestions for the basketball team. Load some Kenny Rogers music on your iPods and keep the horsehair whip handy, just in case.

Ignore healthcare issue now and you might pay dearly later

By Lauren Taylor
Pilot editorial writer

When you go to the family doctor, the receptionist asks you for two things: your co-pay of \$10-\$20 and a little card that has your healthcare information on it. You then get to see the doctor for the price of a cheap dinner date -- a privilege that 47 million Americans do not have.

The cost of any prescribed medication is also \$10-\$20, depending on whether you buy generics.

Health insurance makes getting sick reasonably priced.

Just think what it would be like to suffer through a sinus infection all winter because you have no insurance coverage or \$250, the average retail price of a doctor visit. If you want to fill a prescription for medication, be ready to pay close to \$100 for six pills.

That's \$350 total for a bad case of the sniffles -- and it's a financial trial for many Americans.

Most students are not concerned about health insurance right now, but we are all just a part-time student status away from being booted off of our parents' plans. Once we graduate, we'll have to fend for ourselves when it comes to health care.

On top of that, the chances of getting a job with a company offering a health insurance plan diminishes each year as out-sourcing leads to us of more free-

lance workers.

What does this mean for seniors graduating in May, or for any of us in school full-time, for that matter?

Because the United States is one of the few large nations on Earth without some sort of socialized healthcare, we have to watch as parents ineligible for Medicaid, the government-assisted healthcare, have to decide between taking their children to the doctor or putting food on the table.

That might be something students will be able to identify with as many of us graduate with loans to repay: Do I get rid of this awful cough or pay the Stafford bill this month?

Healthcare reform is a big-ticket issue for candidates on either side.

Most Democratic candidates would like to subsidize healthcare to an extent, to make costs manageable for those with incomes below the poverty line who are ineligible for Medicaid.

Conversely, Republican candidates think this may cause the quality and innovation of our healthcare institutions to go down. They believe that leaving it up citizens to provide their own health

insurance would be more beneficial to the country as a whole.

Most citizens could care less about innovation, though, if they can't afford it. The cost of healthcare is ever-increasing.

The U.S. now spends 16 percent of its income on health services as compared with 5 percent in the 1950s. It's no wonder that voters are pushing for reform and why candidates are expected to make changes. These changes will affect every one of us, no matter what jobs we get after graduation.

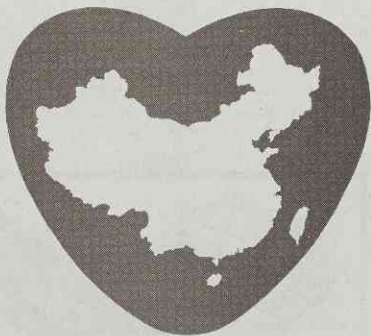
Are you willing to sacrifice a chunk of your income so that we can continue to be an innovative country in the medical field? That's something to think about.

I'm not too busy with classes and homework to flip through a newspaper if means saving me money in the future. Knowing about healthcare insurance and the flaws of our system will make me an informed voter.

How the next president deals with the healthcare issue could mean the difference between a full stomach and the sniffles for many of us. Which will you choose?

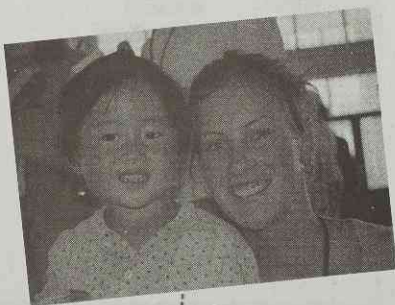
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