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EDITORIAL

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ROBERT S. PIAZZA III Publisher EARLINE WHITE Managing Editor DEBORAH COLLINS Production Manager

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Nobody will win this pingpong match

It's a ping-pong match gone mad. At one end, paddle in hand, is Scott Ralls, new president of the N.C. community college system. He's working up a powerful sweat swiftly swatting the ball. His opponent? Himself. And neither

side seems to be winning.

Not so fast. North Carolina's community colleges

have banned illegal immigrants from seeking degrees. That reverses a controversial policy ordered last fall allowing undocumented students to enter so long as they pay expensive out-of-state tuition. Ralls took that action in his first few days as the top leader of the state's 58 community colleges. He based it on advice from the state attorney general's office, which said last week that federal law appears to prevent states from enrolling illegal im-

migrants in state colleges



and universities. The trouble is, this may not even be an accurate reading of the law.

It's so iffy, in fact, that North Carolina's other higher education guru — university system

MARY SCHULKEN

President Erskine Bowles — wisely told chancellors to stay the course until the

relevant law could be clarified.

Which raises the question: Why would the leader of the community college system be so quick to fire a serve with spin over the net?

Not black and white.

Let's face it. Saying illegal immigrants ought to have rights is like shouting "Go Duke!" at the base of the Old Well in Chapel Hill. This is not a thing that brings out reasoned responses.

Ditto for saying they ought to be able to attend college — even if they pay exorbitant rates.



About Relay for Life

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life, I would like to say thank you to the citizens of Chowan and Perquimans County and supporters of Relay For Life. Our 2008 event was a special occasion "Because Of You."

Each year we come together for 24 hours to celebrate life, to remember those who have lost the battle, and to raise funds for research, education, advocacy, and patient services. The annual event has come and gone but the spirit of Relay lives on.

As we strive to fulfill the mission of the American Cancer Society, the community becomes one team in the fight against cancer. People are living with cancer thanks to your efforts.

Words can not fully express our gratitude to our team captains and members for all your efforts in fundraising and your participation at Relay.

To each of our sponsors and contributors, we say a special thank you. Every dollar is a strike against cancer.

This cooperative effort will have helped Chowan and Perquimans County raise approximately \$160,000 by the end of our Relay season.

All monies raised at Relay For Life are sent to the American Cancer Society to fund its mission. For every dollar raised here, three are returned to North Carolina because of its vast number of teaching and research hospitals. Your dollars also help to support Hope Lodge in Greenville, NC and local patient support programs in this area.

Special thanks must be extended to The Town of Edenton, Chowan Sheriff's Office and John A. Holmes High School who supported us during this event. We also thank our local fire and rescue squads for their commitment to the safety of our participants.

We must also thank our planning committee members, a small group of volunteers who work tirelessly and unselfishly to plan, organize, and coordinate the activities for Relay For Life.

Each year, they continue to work to implement changes which serve to promote a wholesome family event which will be heartwarming and entertaining for all.

The Relay For Life event has numerous facets but the planning committee's embracing of Relay is overwhelming and becomes a reality due to their dedication and commitment.

Most importantly, to the honored cancer survivors...Thank You for being there. You are why we Relay; you are our heroes; you are our inspiration to continue. Your "handprints" at Relay leave a lasting impression on each of us.

We look forward to seeing each of you, next year, as we celebrate 25 years of Relay For Life! Until then, remember that it is about "being a community that takes up the fight". Celebrate Remember FIGHT BACK!

Reader's Corner

The Chowan Herald invites letters to the editor on topics of current interest. Each submission (including e-mails) must carry the writer's name, home address, and daytime phone number. We will not publish more than one letter from the same writer in a 30-day period. Submissions deadline is noon Monday. E-mail letters to chowanherald@nccox.com; mail letters to The Chowan Herald, P.O. Box 207, Edenton, N.C. 27932. We reserve the right to editall letters. Some content cannot be verified.

The Chowan Herald Reader Advisory Board -

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Regarding trap baiting

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to the letter you recently published regarding "trap baiting."

I personally do not put food scraps in the trash, simply because it attracts roaches and mice into the house. I empty food scraps in the edge of the woods.

I also have a dog but when she goes outside she is watched. She rarely leaves the yard anyway.

If you don't have time to keep an eye on the animal, you need to either tie the animal, put up a pen or fence the yard.

But the issue isn't as black-and-white as it sounds.

For one thing, we're not just talking about adults who broke the law to come here. Most undocumented college students were brought here years ago as children by their parents. They graduated from high school here and have become part of our culture and our communities.

For another, it's in the long-term interest of the state to offer people who live and work here as much education as possible. We are all better off with workers who have skills and knowledge than we are with untrained, uneducated workers.

Those are both reasons why acting hastily to bar illegal immigrants from enrollment is a lousy policy.

Here's another: The federal government says it has no authority over admissions at North Carolina colleges. Both Ralls and the attorney general's office are seeking further clarification. Even Ralls admits the policy could change again.

So why play ping-pong?

This policy reflects an attitude a lot of North Carolinians share: People who come here illegally have no business taking advantage of public resources built for the benefit of citizens and paid for with tax dollars.

It's also strategic: A few politicians in the state legislature may be a little more amenable to community college budget requests if schools crack down on illegals.

Meanwhile, the ball flies furiously back and forth across the net.

Mary C. Schulken is an Observer associate editor. Write her at P.O. Box 30308, Charlotte, NC 28230-0308, or mschulken@ charlotteobserver.com. Kelly Cross Community Manager American Cancer Society

As far as cats, there is little that can be done about their roaming unless you keep them inside.

> Carolyn Arnett Edenton

On Oily Politicians

Dear Editor:

The presidential candidates talked and talked about the high price of oil, but not one offered a solution, perhaps in order not to offend financial contributors or because none had a clue.

I am not an expert, but I read and hear, and there appears no solution.

With continued demand, the price of gasoline will continue up and up and evenfually, I assume, doomsday will come for most of us when the earth is sucked mostly dry of oil.

Additionally, I read the price of oil on the international market is based on the U.S. dollar and with the falling dollar, there are rumblings the pricing should be changed to euros which would double our cost per gallon.

If this is so, we as a nation should prepare for the inevitable crisis, and the only way this can be done is through legislation which no candidate or politician has yet proposed.

It is difficult to know the truth.

Too much money is involved with too much influence on our government for the truth to surface. What we need is a national committee of our best intelligent and objective men and women to study and confirm the future we face and tell us what we should do. We did that in World War II to make the atomic bomb and we tried to do the same with the Iraq Study Group. In the meantime, for consideration: The oil companies say they want to drill in ANWAR, but do they really?

It will take 7 to 8 years at a cost of billions with an estimate based on present usage that the ANWAR oil pool will be exhausted in a year.

If so, it's not worth it financially for big oil to develop and drill ANWAR until the time comes when a drop of oil is gold.

Big oil complains that because of the opposition of environmentalists it does not have enough refineries to supply our need; but the wrinkle is a refinery costs billions to build. So, financially, they will make do with the present refineries and continue accumulating record profits.

And there's some sense in their position as no one foresees an additional supply of oil to support another refinery. Also, as I read, there is no known major oil deposit that justifies the cost of drilling.

Day by day ethanol is more discredited. The highly subsidized conversion of food into energy is causing global hunger. Oil shale and deep ocean deposits are talked about but in one case it takes more or equal energy to produce energy; in the other, it's the financial cost. All else is twenty years away, if ever.

If all this is true, the only solution is in the conservation of energy, a field where government has failed us for the sake of big oil and big business.

We cannot give automobile manufacturers ten, twenty or twenty-five years to manufacture vehicles which make 50 miles or more per gallons. We must conserve to survive until another energy source is discovered.

By law, the government should mandate only small, light four cylinder cars be built with heavy, six and eight cylinder automobiles banned. The 55 miles an hour speed limit should be reinstituted. Depending upon use and need, trucks require separate guidelines.

Outside of transportation needs, windmills should be built along the coast and in the wind-swept heartland. We cannot accept the argument that windmills spoilthe view.

Nuclear plants should be constructed. (Eighty percent of France's electricity is supplied by nuclear power, and its advanced train service also lessens the need for fossil fuel.)

Solar power is another alternative, but the financial cost in our present economy is beyond what the majority of American householders can afford.

In wintertime, we're back to lowering the heat and putting on heavier clothing. Many people will object to the conservation methods I have listed but I do not know of other bulk methods to save energy.

Conservation can only be accomplished by law and not on a voluntary, individual basis. If the situation is as dire as it looks and whittles away our budgets and way of life, it's well-past time to do what we can. Robert Chapman, Edenton

QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

— In our May 14 edition, we asked, "What key issues should frame the national debate to decide who our next president will be?"

Here's how one Chowan County resident felt about the issue. In a letter to the paper, he responded with the following ideas (see answer at right).

The question I would most like to hear our Presidential (and Congressional) candidates address will remain rhetorical because it is kryptonite to the superegos of politicians ... whose careers rise in direct proportion to the promises they make.

Many people believe recent high gasoline, food and other commodity prices are caused by greedy companies. I don't discount their greed, but submit that the major cause of soaring prices is the demise of the dollar, which is falling like a rock against other world currencies because of unrestrained federal spending and perennial deficits.

From World War II until now deficit financing worked to our advantage, but the free ride is over (to list the reasons for this paradigm shift would take up too much room here.) Our national debt is beyond imagination; if you consider unfunded Social Security and Medicare obligations it is \$53 trillion dollars, or \$176,000 for every American. It is increasing by more than \$1.2 billion each day ... more than was accumulated in total in our nation's first 110 years.

My question: "Mr./Ms. Candidate, do you have ANY plan that might even begin to address this issue, which in the long term dwarfs every other problem this country faces? Have you heard ANY candidate for ANY office even mention this issue in passing? John Sams, Edenton