

CHOWAN HERALD

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Nobody will win this ping-pong 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 immigrants 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 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.

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.

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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!

Kelly Cross
Community Manager
American Cancer Society

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 eventually, 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.

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

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 edit all 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.

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

Carolyn Arnett
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).