

... Fox laws sought

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 According to Balfour, revenue sharing funds from the federal government are in great jeopardy. "I'm not kicking the project. It is needed in Hoke County. If we are going to get industry in the county, we must educate the population," said Balfour.
 Further action on this item will come nearer budget time.

Fox hunting

Members of the commission also took action to endorse a move in the North Carolina State Legislature concerning the repealing of a law prohibiting fox hunting in the state without special permission.

Sergeant Major James Knott told the commissioners that he has collected 424 signatures on petitions wanting the law eliminated.

"Most of the signatures are from hunters, farmers and citizens who have had trouble with the fox," said Knott.

According to Knott, hunters are blaming the decline of small game in the area on foxes.

"The population is not under control even in those counties where there is a limit (on hunting foxes)," said Knott.

"In everything I've read, if a predator is not controlled, it will turn to quail and other small game for food. Right now there is no fox control in Hoke County," he said.

"Ten years ago, you could find rabbits here. Not anymore," Knott said.

According to state Rep. Danny DeVane, the removal of the law will be a fair move to the hunters of Hoke County.

DeVane is trying to get the law passed in the legislature.

According to DeVane, the law will include:

- A gun and bow and arrow season will extend from December 1 to January 1.
- Trapping season for the animal will be from January 2-31.
- Traps will be checked twice daily by the owners.
- There will be a 30 fox limit per season.

• Trap chains must have three swivels to allow animals to be caught without danger of them twisting their legs off attempting to escape.

• Traps no larger than "one and one-half leg-hold traps" may be used.

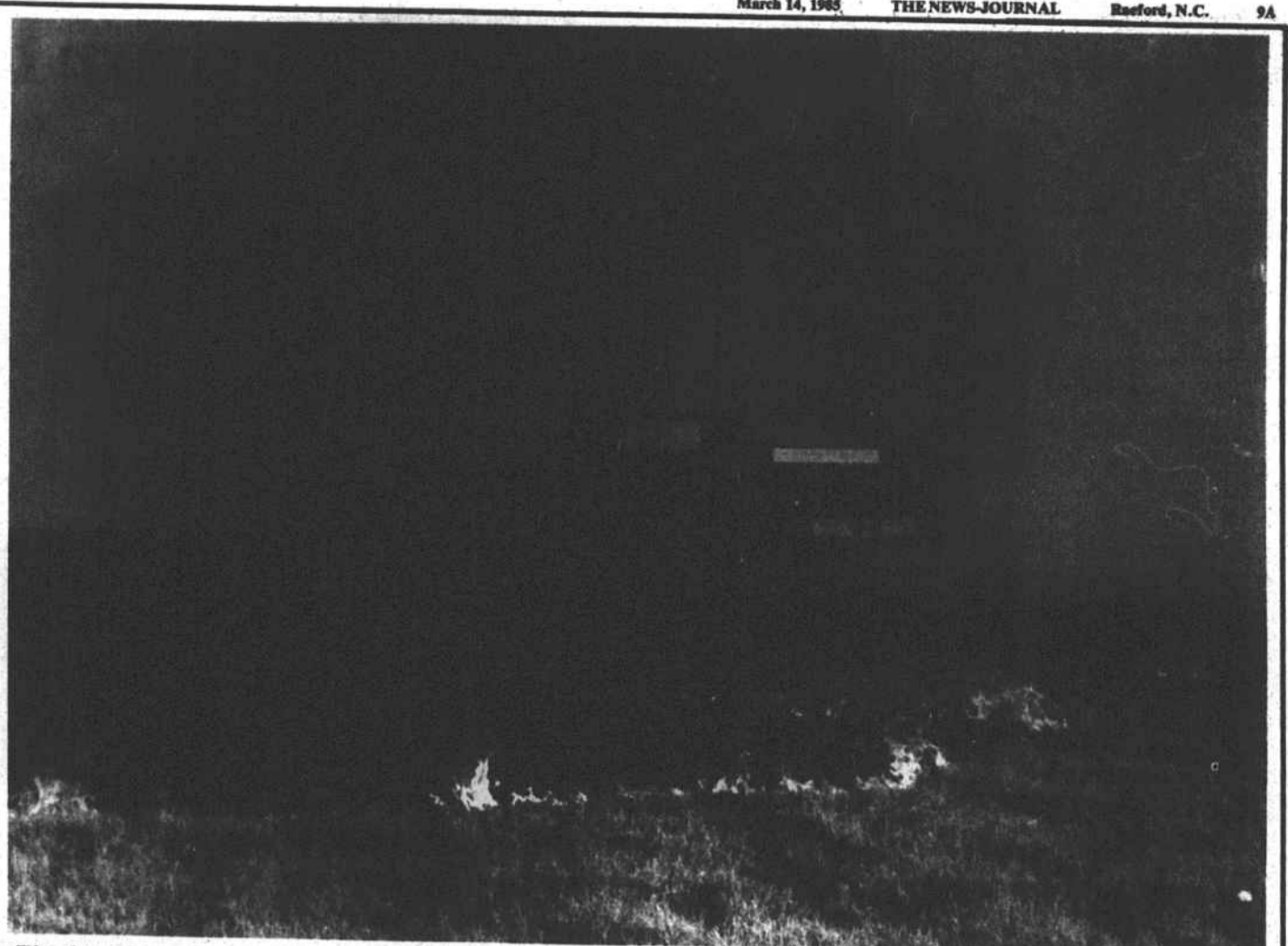
"If you put out a bigger trap than a one and one-half leg-hold trap, there is potential for someone to get hurt," said Knott.

"I've gotten two calls opposing this because of small children," Commissioner Wyatt Upchurch said.

According to DeVane and Knott, the danger of traps to children is minimal and if a pet is caught in a trap, he should not be hurt if the traps are no larger than the recommended size.

During the meeting, Commissioners also:

- Denied a request from the Cherokee Indians of Hoke County to fund their school.
- Accepted a site plan for the proposed Burlington Park project.
- Passed a resolution approving a public auction to dispose of surplus and confiscated material by the Hoke County Sheriff's Department. The auction will be held on April 10 at 10 a.m. in the vacant lot in front of the Sheriff's Department.



The burning
 This grass fire last Wednesday on State Road 1455 was just one of dozens that have plagued Hoke County in the last two weeks. About five grass and woods fires raged through a dry Hoke County Tuesday carried by warm March winds. The fires were not confined to any one

area of the county and burned from McCain to Duffy. The largest fire erupted in the Oakdale Gin area and threatened several dwellings requiring mutual aid from four county volunteer units.

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... Around Town continued

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 Graham's Service Station will help the looks of that block in the city. If they get the old depot looking good, it will really be a boost to the city.

Also the report of a new industry helps the spirit of citizens when they had thought the progress of the place had died.

Everything we do to improve the image of Hoke County and Raeford will attract business to us.

The ACC tournament was all anyone could ask for and in my opinion the best teams won in Atlanta. Time will tell in the NCAA tournament on who will be in the final four.

Most of us who are retired get out of the main stream of what we need to do to help promote Hoke

County and Raeford and keep them moving forward. We live on an income that is fixed, except for the rise and fall of interest rates on our savings. So when something like the project to get the phone line from Raeford to Fayetteville takes off long distance, we think first of how it will hurt our pocket-book. So I would like to give my reasons for being for this project.

Now it might raise my phone bill a couple of dollars a month, but in the long run it may be cheaper to pay the couple of bucks. You are asking why?

By getting this line in for direct service I believe we will have many people now building in the Cumberland County side of the line moving over and building in Hoke County. The people of the military service retiring must have

phone connections to Ft. Bragg. Every house built in Hoke will increase our tax base.

The Federal government is cutting off more and more revenue each year to the counties and cities. This money must be replaced and it is property owners that must bear the load. The increase in taxes could be more than what you would pay the phone company.

If we don't have enough tax base and we here can't afford a heavier tax load, then like banks and other financial institutions, we must look for a county to merge with in the future. Our tax rate is lower than most adjoining counties.

We need to back the Chamber of Commerce and our County Commissioners to get this project approved.

... Turkey races on tap for festival

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 volved in finding out who has the fastest bird.

The winners of the heats are put together to compete in the "grand finale race."

"Sometimes you can get a bird to run the course in 8 or 9 seconds," said Cunningham.

"There is no hitting or striking the birds to get them to move faster," he said.

Owners of the birds can run with them and sometimes a broom swished behind the birds is helpful in moving them along.

Many of the owners put their

birds into training before the date, according to Jay Combes, owner of the Inn on Lake Waramaug.

"A lot of people raise turkeys for themselves for Thanksgiving and Christmas," said Combes.

Many people who live around that area had never seen live turkeys, he said.

The olympics were started because the inn needed an event around Thanksgiving, according to Combes.

The inn sponsors 18 events year-round.

"Some are historical and some are just for fun."

Last year, there were about 1,000 at the olympics including representatives from P.M. Magazine.

Although the fun is first rate, many of the birds do not appreciate the reception they receive upon returning home.

The olympics are held the Sunday before Thanksgiving, said Combes, adding "a lot of the birds have dates two or three days after the races - win, lose, or draw."

Sadly, their dates are with warm to hot ovens.

The owners of winning birds get to enjoy their turkeys twice, he said.

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