

## Rampaging Tellico Forest Fire Is Finally Licked

### Board Protests Phone Increase

#### Commerce Body Moves To Halt Boost In Rates

Opposition to a rate increase being sought by the Western Carolina Telephone company is mounting in Franklin and it seems likely that the company will find the going bumpy when it appears before the N. C. Utilities commission in December for a hearing on the proposed rate boost.

The proposed increase would boost all classes of service \$1.25 per unit. Approval rests with the commission.

At a board of director's meeting of the Franklin Chamber of Commerce November 5, that body went on record as opposing the increase and prepared a resolution stating the grounds for its protest.

The board asked permission to present its case at the commission hearing, slated in Asheville on December 2.

It is also understood that a number of private citizens in Franklin are raising funds to hire an attorney to protest the proposed rate hike at the hearing.

Unfavorable reaction has been the rule rather than the exception here since the company, which serves Franklin and Highlands in this area, announced October 23 that it had applied for an increase. If granted, the boost will be the second for the company in a year.

In its resolution, the commerce body board protests the proposed increase on the grounds that the company had an increase last year and points out that there has been no material improvement in service or facilities in this area since that time.

In December, 1951, W. C. T. C. put a new rate schedule into effect which was designed to bring in a gross increase in revenue of \$40,189.44, and soon after announced its merger with several other telephone companies in the Buncombe and Madison county area.

The resolution calls attention to this merger with the Carolina Telephone company, the Weaverville Telephone company, the Madison Telephone company, and the North Buncombe Telephone company with the comment:

"... we respectfully insist that the area served by the other corporations is in no way integrated with the area served by the Western Carolina Telephone company prior to the merger, and respectfully show the commission that in consideration of this application for rate increase the separate areas should be given due consideration, for there is neither physical integration or other relationship as to service or any other matters, between the separate areas..."

Should a rate increase be justified, the resolution suggests that it be handled on a percentage basis and not a flat increase per telephone.

When announcing the company's application for a new rate boost, R. E. McKelvey, general manager of W. C. T. C., said the increase is essential to adequately and reasonably furnish telephone facilities to the public because of the increase in labor, materials, and supplies, the growth and demand for service, and to carry on and complete the company's improvement and expansion program.

The proposed increase, which would apply not only to Franklin and Highlands, but to other towns served by W.C.T.C. as well, would bring in a gross revenue of \$117,218, of which

#### PLAN TACKY PARTY

Nequassa chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star will hold a benefit tacky party at Kelly's Inn Saturday evening at 8 o'clock. Games, contests, auctions, and other entertainment features are planned. The event is open to the public.

### WAYNESVILLE BEATS LOCALS

#### Panthers Hold Line Up To Last Minute; Score, 14-0

##### BULLETIN

Eight Panthers have been invited to play on the Western squad in the Smoky Mountain Bowl in Bryson City on Thanksgiving Day, bowl officials in Bryson City have announced.

Coaches Ralph (Chuck) McConnell, of Franklin, and Ike Olson, of Murphy, have been selected to coach the western squad.

The eight invited to the bowl game are Carroll Childers, Carroll Keener, Charlie Cabe, Thomas Jones, John Henry, George Brown, Sammy Henderson, and Dick Mashburn.

Further details of the bowl game, which will bring together Smoky Mountain conference seniors in an east-west battle, will be announced later.

The never-say-die Franklin Panthers, brazenly ignoring press clippings that rated them as underdogs, built an almost impregnable defensive wall around the powerful Waynesville Mountaineers here Friday night, only to have it crumble in the four minutes of the game as the Mountaineers snared two aeriels for touchdowns to pull their grid reputation of the fire with a 14 to 0 victory. An estimated 2,000 fans rubbed their eyes in amazement as the Panthers toed the line with

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#### Mrs. Ropes, Formerly Of Franklin, Is Dead

Word was received here yesterday by Mrs. T. J. Johnston of the death of her sister, Mrs. L. S. Ropes, in Helena, Mont., Tuesday night. Mrs. Ropes, the former Miss Nora Deal, was reared in Franklin, and had many friends among older residents here.



Tellico residents, state highway crews, Nantahala forest service personnel, and volunteers had their hands full last Thursday night and Friday morning when a rampaging forest fire threatened to wipe out several homes in the Tellico section. Luckily, their efforts were successful and no homes were destroyed, although the fire was too close for comfort at some dwellings. It burned to within a few feet of this home, and the homes of Robert Ramsey and the Rev. Judd Smith on the Tellico road. In the background is a fire-blackened hillside, still smoldering from the blaze, which swept over 4,000 acres before fire-fighters and timely rain Sunday evening brought it under control.

### Murray Heads New Minister Organization

The Rev. C. E. Murray, pastor of the First Methodist church, has been named president of the newly-organized Macon County Ministerial association.

Other officers are the Rev. W. L. Sorrells, pastor of the Iotia Baptist church, vice-president; and the Rev. Robert M. Hart, pastor of the Highlands Presbyterian church, secretary-treasurer.

The association was formed at a special meeting of ministers

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### Negro Football Game Postponed; Scheduled Again On November 26

The Negro football game, which was scheduled here Monday night was postponed on account of rain, but will be played the evening of November 26, according to G. L. Hines, principal of the Chapel (Negro) school.

The opposing teams will be those from Central Consolidated High school at Sylva and Boys Industrial Institute, Toccoa, Ga.

Negro high school students from this county attend the consolidated school at Sylva, and four Franklin boys are members of that team.

### Youngsters Off For Fat Stock Show

Thirty-five Macon County Future Farmers of America and 4-H club members are shooting for a retreat performance at the 18th annual Western North Carolina Fat Stock Show and Sale, which got under way at the Hominy Valley Horse and Hound club pavilion near Enka yesterday (Wednesday).

The Macon youngsters and their entries last year made history by copping the Grand Champion, Reserve champion, and 30 blue ribbons to completely dominate the show. At the sale, the 31 entries (there was one red ribbon winner) sold for \$13,037.74, or an average of 44 cents per pound—eight cents per pound higher than the market price that day for choice baby beef.

And this year, with 35 choice entries, they again will be after the top spot in the show and sale.

The local group left for the pavilion Monday afternoon accompanied by Wayne Proffitt, vocational agricultural teacher at Franklin High school. The extra day gave them time to put the animals in the pink of condition.

Those having entries in the show include Max Morgan, Bill Pouts, Roger Shepherd, Leroy Peek, Lamar Houston, Johnny Tippet, Billy Stockton, Genevieve Whitmire, Richard Gibson, Harley Harper, Larry Ferguson, Elizabeth Ammons, John Kinsland, Eugene Taylor, Joe Taylor, Jack Taylor, John Taylor, Kenneth Taylor, Charles Gregory, Wayne Gregory, Paul Killian, Johnny Killian, Frank Killian, James "Pete" Setser, J. D. Hast-

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### Macon Group Attends Welfare Conference

H. H. Plemmons, chairman of the Macon County welfare board, Chairman W. E. Baldwin and John Roane of the board of county commissioners, win, W. W. Edwards and John Roane, of the board of county commissioners, and Mrs. F. H. Potts, superintendent, and Mrs. John Crawford, of the county department of public welfare, attended a district welfare meeting in Bryson City last Friday, at which Dr. Ellen Winston, head of the state department, was the chief speaker.

### VOTE OUTCOME REMAINS SAME

#### Totals Change Some; But Not Races; Official Count Is Held

While the unofficial election returns reported in last week's issue of The Press—following the general election on Tuesday—were slightly inaccurate, there was no change in the outcome of any of the races.

The official count was conducted Thursday morning by Siler Slagle, chairman of the

TABULATION ON PAGE 5  
Tabulation of official Macon vote in all races, by precincts, will be found on page 5.

county elections board, at the courthouse. With the exception of the state house of representatives race, Macon went along with the Democrats.

The closest race, which saw a Republican win Macon's seat in the state house of representatives for the first time in 26



WALTER DEAN  
years, was between ex-Deputy Sheriff Walter Dean and Rep. C. Tom Bryson, who was seeking his second term.

Mr. Dean was the victor by a scant margin of 43 votes.

The last time Macon sent a Republican to the house was in 1926, when the late Rev. Alvin Solesbee defeated the late J. A. Porter by a narrow margin.

Although the loser nationally, the Democratic hopeful Gov. SEE NO. 5, PAGE 12

### RAIN HELPS STOP THREE DAY BLAZE

#### Destroys Estimated 4,000 Acres Of Timber; No Homes Burn

Determined fire-fighting crews, aided by a long over-due rain, Sunday night brought under control a rampaging forest fire in the Tellico section, which roared almost unchecked for three days and burned over approximately 4,000 acres of timberland.

Despite rumors throughout the county to the contrary, no families in the area were burned out, although the fire threatened to wipe out several homes along the Tellico road soon after it broke out Thursday afternoon.

A few fighters were overcome by smoke and one received treatment for minor burns on the feet.

Fighters faced overwhelming odds in trying to control the fire, which allied itself with stiff winds as it swept swiftly over the tinder-dry forests, hopping fire lines almost as fast as crews could rough them out.

At times the fire burned up-slope at close to 60 miles per hour, according to Assistant Nantahala Forest Supervisor Paul H. Russell.

The rain, which started late Sunday afternoon as fighters were bringing the fire under control, was the first measurable amount for this county in more than a month.

Although periodic patrols were still made of fire lines, the weary fighters turned the chore of putting the blaze out completely over to the rain.

From the standpoint of rapid spread and destruction of timber, the fire probably was the

#### REOPENED TO HUNTING

Western North Carolina forests, closed to hunting last week because of the fire danger, have been reopened, following the week-end rain, officials announced.

worst in this county's history, Mr. Russell said.

Forty to 50 Nantahala forest personnel and state highway crews, Tellico residents, and volunteers from several sections in the county, including Highlands, battled the fire on a 12 to 15-hour rotation system for the better part of three days.

Sometime Friday the fire jumped into Swain county.

An eyewitness report that the fire popped up in three different places about 1 p. m. Thursday, lead forest service officials to believe it was intentionally set, the assistant supervisor said.

As the fire gained headway Thursday night, Tellico residents and a state highway department crew, organized a last-ditch fight to keep it from wiping out several homes along the Tellico road. It burned to within a few feet of Robert Ramsey's and the Rev. Judd Smith's homes.

Friday morning Tellico men were patrolling the road watching for new break-overs.

It also threatened to sweep into the Lowermilk Creek, Rattlesnake Creek, and Licklog settlements, Mr. Russell said.

Several times during the three-day fight, crews thought they had the fire tied down, SEE NO. 6, PAGE 12

### District Meeting Of Garden Clubs To Be Held Here

District No. 1 of the N. C. Federation of Garden clubs will hold its annual meeting in Franklin next fall.

The invitation to meet here was extended by Mrs. John Wasilk, president, and Miss Laura M. Jones, of the Franklin club, when they attended the 1952 meeting at Tryon Thursday.

District No. 1 embraces Buncombe and counties west. About 100 persons usually attend the annual meetings.



After sweeping the field at last year's Western North Carolina Fat Stock Show and Sale, local Future Farmers of America and 4-H club members were shooting for a repeat performance at the show yesterday (Wednesday), held at Enka. Pictures above are several boys watching Wayne Proffitt, vocational agricultural teacher, put the shears to one of Macon's 35 entries prior to the groups departure for the show Monday. (L to R) Mr. Proffitt, Bill Bradley, Gareth Hughes, Harley Henderson, Leroy Peek, and Joe Phillips. The calf belongs to the Franklin F.F.A. chapter.