

the nation

Gators to substitute for burgers?

United Press International
BATON ROUGE, La. — Fast food fans who are bored with the burger, taco and chicken routine are bypassing those golden arches and Kentucky colonels these days for an exotic new taste — fried alligator meat.

In south Louisiana, where people eagerly devour tons of frog legs, crawfish and virtually anything that swims or crawls, fried gator is invading the fast food market.

One of the first commercial gator meat outlets in operation is a fried chicken franchise whose owner thought it might be a good idea. But Diana Rice, manager of Danny's Fried Chicken, thought it was a weird idea.

"I'm from Colorado. They don't eat gators in Colorado," she said. "That's why when my boss called me up and asked me if I wanted to sell alligator, I said, 'What?' I've been here seven years, but I'm still strictly a meat and potato girl, but once in a while I try something else."

She tried the gator and declared, "It's delicious. Very good."

The meat is cut in strips, mari-

nated in a special seasoning and dipped in a batter that is a little thicker than used on the chicken. Fried gator meat has a texture similar to pork and a delicate fish taste like frog legs.

The first shipment of gator meat arrived from southwest Louisiana less than a week ago. Free samples were given to chicken customers and a notice on the outdoor marquee announced fried gator for sale.

Within five days the meat was sold out. Thursday afternoon, Rice was waiting for another, overdue shipment. So were her customers.

"I've got people breathing down my neck," she said. "They are sitting here waiting. It's unbelievable."

Customers can have a small order of 4 ounces for \$2.50 and a large order of 8 ounces for \$3.50. Either dish comes with a side order of rice, cole slaw, baked beans or french fries.

"We would be able to sell it all year round if we could get it and if it was killed legally," said Rice.

Louisiana's coastal parishes provide a home for an estimated 350,000 alligators. Each year just

Journal forecasts rise in alcohol use

United Press International
NEW YORK — A grocery trade magazine predicts beer, wine and liquor consumption in the United States will grow 20 percent, 115 percent and 30 percent respectively during the 1980s. The forecast was made in a recent issue of Progressive Grocer.

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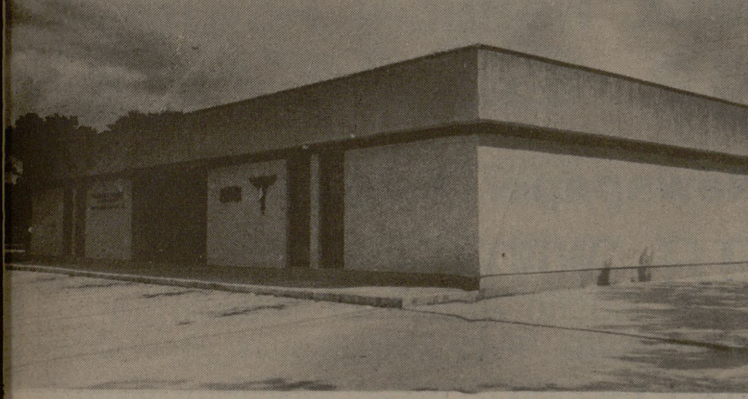
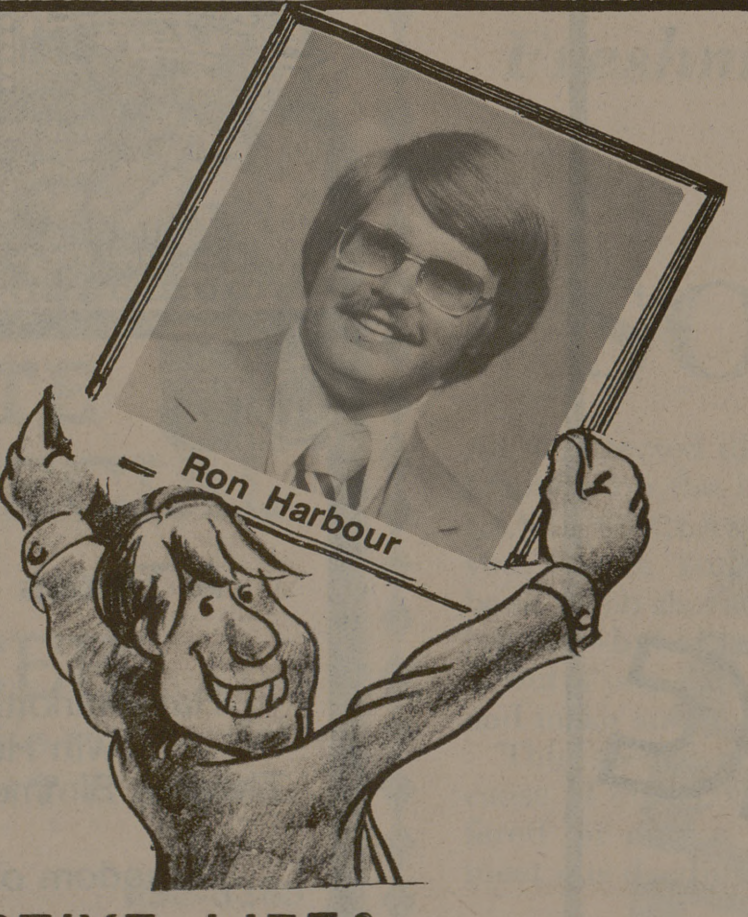
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