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Weather Wednesday: high 85, low 57, hum. 65 percent. By 7 a m. Thursday. .3 inches of rain had fallen.

The \$40 million shortfall was really \$20 million and — don't worry — it's covered. That's what N.C. Super Superintendent of Public Instruction Bob Etheridge told reporters at a news conference Wednesday.

To make up their portion of the state's Public School Fund deficit, Polk County Schools administrators had planned to cancel June summer school, and start a scaled-back summer school program in July, in addition to other cuts.

Those won't be necessary now. And that's the good news.

But, as with most day's news, there was a good dose of bad news served as well. Wednesday, the U.S. Department of Education released showing the Carolinas public education system slipping.

Graduation rates fell in 1988, both states spent more money but remained 40th and 41st in national rankings.

Education Secretary Lauro Cavazos said the national report card shows the nation's schools need "radical reforms..."

Continued From Page One

Faulkner Sees Tight Budget

It is a time for belt tightening in Polk County, according to incumbent commissioner Ken Faulkner.

"The word is out," Faulkner said "There's going to be a trickle down from the federal government (of costs now being borne with federal dollars). We have to be extremely conservative."

Faulkner, first elected in 1988, is seeking the Republican nomination in the May 8 primary to run for re-election. In November, there will be three nominees from each party seeking three seats on the Polk County Board of Commissioners.

Faulkner is often touted as one of the few who've ever been elected to the board who is not a native of Polk County. Faulkner retired from the New York State Parkway Police where he served for 25 years. He has lived in Green Creek for 20 years.

"I just love it here," he said in a recent interview. "The rural beauty of the countryside. I want to preserve it, but we do need industry too."

His advertising campaign claims Faulkner is "not a me-too commissioner."

"I think for myself," he said "I am not easily swayed."

A sample of what Faulkner is unswervingly thinking these days:

On the budget: "I believe in progress, but... There are a lot of

Continued On Back Page

In State Play-Offs

The Landrum High School baseball team will play in the State 1-A District 1 play-offs Saturday at 3 p.m. against Lewisville at Union High School with Jonesville as the host. This is a double elimination. Landrum will play 2 games Saturday.

Opening Day

Saturday, May 5 is opening day for Polk County Little League. The season will be opened by Dr. James Causby, superintendent of Polk County Schools, when he throws out the first ball. The schedule for the day is as follows: 10:30 Royals vs Giants; 1 p.m. Dodgers vs Cardinals; 3:30 Pirates vs Yankees.

The officers of Little League invite the community to come out to Harmon Field and cheer the teams on.

Puppy Show Sunday At 1 P.M.

The Tryon Hounds Puppy Show will be held Sunday, May 6 at 1 p.m. at the Tryon Hounds Clubhouse.

An average baked sweet potato has 141 calories and over 8,800 units of vitamin A, about twice the recommended daily allowance.

Crowell Takes Environmental Stance

Of the four candidates running for the Republican nomination for commissioner in next Tuesday's primary, only one is talking about old trees — Bill Crowell.

Crowell, the owner of the Tryon Theater and soon-to-be opened ACE Hardware store in Lynn, is staking much of his campaign on the belief that people want to keep a beautiful environment beautiful.

And on the belief that people west of I-26 want representation on the county board, Crowell lives on Godshaw Hill in Tryon.

"I am looking at what happens 15 years down the road when Polk becomes a bedroom community," he said. "It is inevitable. When the beltway around Spartanburg is complete, it will be a 15 minute commute to the beltway industries that will spring up."

"What will happen if Greenville/Spartanburg triples in size like Charlotte has done in the last 20 years — going from 250,000 to nearly 1 million. Look at Gastonia, which is 30 miles from Charlotte, and Rock Hill, which is 35 miles away. We're not 35 miles from Spartanburg and we have a better view than they (Gastonia and Rock Hill) do."

That Polk County view is one of the things that concerns Crowell. He'd like to see streetlights on the mountainsides buffered on the

Continued On Back Page