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The weather Thursday: high 78, low 68, hum. 80 percent. By Friday at 7 a.m., .15 inches of rain had fallen.

The University of North Carolina Center for Public Television called today to report that Linda Haynes of Tryon has been elected to the center's board of directors. It's good to know that a neighbor of ours is helping to provide the best television programming on the air.

The Polk County Board of Commissioners meets today at 3 p.m. at the courthouse annex in Columbus.

The deadline to make reservations for the Tryon Thermal Belt Chamber of Commerce annual membership dinner is Wednesday, Sept. 19. The dinner will be held at the Stone Hedge Inn on Monday, Sept. 24 at 7 p.m.

Melody Jenkins, president of Blue Ridge Mountain Hosts, will speak on the future of this organization which promotes tourism in the area.

To make your reservations, call the chamber office at 859-6326.

Hedy Lonero of Red Fox Road called to ask that we alert

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Meets Tonight

The Polk County Democratic Executive Board will meet at 7:30 p.m. tonight, Sept. 17th at the Democratic Headquarters to discuss the campaign and election. All members are urgently requested to attend.

Wolverine Ladies Cross Country

The Polk County Lady Wolverines participated with 7 other schools in the A.C. Reynolds Invitational on Thursday, Sept. 13. Polk County finished 6th overall. Individual scores were Karen Godlock 1st with 21:24, Katie Malone 3rd with 21:38, Jennifer Owens 48th, 28:18; Rhonda Burnett 52nd, 29:03; Kelly Sparks, 62nd, 30:50. Also participating was Earron Lewis 34:12.

Don't Forget Area-Wide Crusade

The Area-Wide Crusade sponsored by Redeemed Baptist Church begins tonight, Monday, Sept. 17, at 7 p.m. in the Family Center across the road from the church on Blackstock Rd., Landrum.

All churches, pastors and anyone interested in coming is welcome. There will be different area pastors speaking each night at 7 p.m. and special music. The Crusade will continue through Sat., Sept. 22.

St. Luke's Hopes To Control Destiny

The Medicare program has St. Luke's Hospital in a pickle.

Eighty percent of St. Luke's patients use Medicare, one of the highest Medicare patient census percentages around. Talk about Medicare services, for which the hospital expects to receive \$2.6 million less than it charges this year, and you get a littany of woes:

- * Costs of health care services have risen twice as fast as Medicare reimbursement rates.

- * The Medicare reimbursement policies often leave hospitals holding the check. For instance, the "admitting diagnosis" largely determines the reimbursement. If a person enters the hospital with the flu, and then has a heart attack, or falls out of bed and breaks a hip and needs a hip replacement, the hospital is paid the reimbursement rate for treatment of the flu, "with complications."

For just five Medicare patients in July, St. Luke's total charges ran to \$131,951. Medicare reimbursed the hospital \$7,974.

- * St. Luke's receives even less in reimbursements because it is classified as rural hospital, where the federal agency assumes costs are lower. If St. Luke's had moved a few miles south into Spartanburg County, it would have recieved an additional \$600,000 in Medicare reimbursements last year.

The Medicare picture is not expected to improve, either. The

Senate Budget Committee's recommended deficit reduction package called for a \$2 billion cut in Medicare, and deeper cuts are being considered in the budget summit talks.

"The Medicare problem is there," said St. Luke's Board of Trustees chairman Joe Claud. "It takes careful management for us to be able to handle the burden placed on us."

That careful management is primarily in the hands of President Tom Bradshaw and SunHealth, the management company hired by the board of trustees in 1986.

"What St. Luke's is doing," Bradshaw said in an interview recently, "is looking at other health care activities and services which are independent of Medicare reimbursements."

Two new services already being offered are "Caregivers," a private duty nursing service, and "surrogate children," a private case management service.

There are 50 part-time employees working in St. Luke's Caregivers program, helping in the homes of any persons who are functionally or mentally incapable of handling their daily routine.

Caregivers is showing a net income for the hospital, Bradshaw said.

The "surrogate children" program is not being widely marketed yet, though a few

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