

Sheriffs raid cocaine laboratory; may be largest in the country

SUNNY VALLEY (AP) — What may be the largest cocaine laboratory uncovered so far in the country was seized here this week, a Josephine County sheriff's detective said Thursday.

Sgt. Alan Pendergrass said deputies seized chemicals, equipment and three or four pounds of what is believed to be cocaine from a large, newly built home. Sunny Valley is located about 15 miles north of Grants Pass in southern Oregon.

No arrests have been made.

If the white powder seized is cocaine, it could have a street value of up to \$250,000, Pendergrass said.

Investigators, armed with a search warrant, raided the house Friday and secured it over the weekend "because of the size of the operation and the amount of the

evidence," Pendergrass said. A search was completed Wednesday.

Pendergrass declined to give the name of the homeowner, saying he didn't think "it would be fair since the suspects haven't yet been pinpointed."

The raid ended an investigation that began in late March and involved state and local police, the FBI and the federal Drug Enforcement Administration. Pendergrass said Santa Barbara, Calif., officials also participated.

Pendergrass said the operation appeared to involve Oregon and California.

"We believe this to be one of the largest, if not the largest, cocaine lab discovered in the United States," Pendergrass said.

OIT's Blake proposes state back high school of science and math

SALEM (AP) — A proposal that would establish a state high school of science and mathematics would be a wise move for Oregon, says the president of Oregon Institute of Technology.

Larry Blake helped develop a similar school in North Carolina in his previous job as president of that state's community college system.

Blake told members of the House Education Committee Thursday that the North Carolina school attracted more interest from high-technology companies than math-science offerings at the college level.

"It certainly impressed the leaders of

our business and industry," Blake said, "particularly high-tech industry throughout this nation as a fact that here was a governor and here was a state committed to excellence in science and mathematics, which is extremely important to them."

"And also that it would have an impact wherever they located in the state — not just in the resident school but elsewhere."

Blake said the math-science school would enhance the rest of Oregon's education system by encouraging students to excel.

Hatfield critical of military aid

ASTORIA (AP) — Sen. Mark Hatfield says he will "give very, very severe scrutiny" to Pres. Ronald Reagan's request for more military aid for El Salvador.

"Each year it seems we're losing ground and each year they want more money," Hatfield said in a radio interview here Thursday.

The Oregon Republican, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, noted the United States already has pumped about \$1 billion into the war-torn Central American nation since President Carter left office.

On another matter, Hatfield said he believes funds can be found to promote improvement in public education around the country. A resolution calling for such a program was introduced by Hatfield and Rep. Les AuCoin, D-Ore., on Thursday.

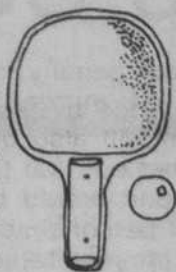
Hatfield also said Congress has no alternative but to increase the federal debt ceiling.

"The debt ceiling limitation is a charade," he said. "We don't have any option. The debt ceiling is raised every time we hit it."

Hatfield said he would like to see a real effort to reduce the federal budget deficit and remove the need for an ever-increasing debt ceiling.

Hatfield was in Astoria as part of a series of appearances along the northern Oregon coast.

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