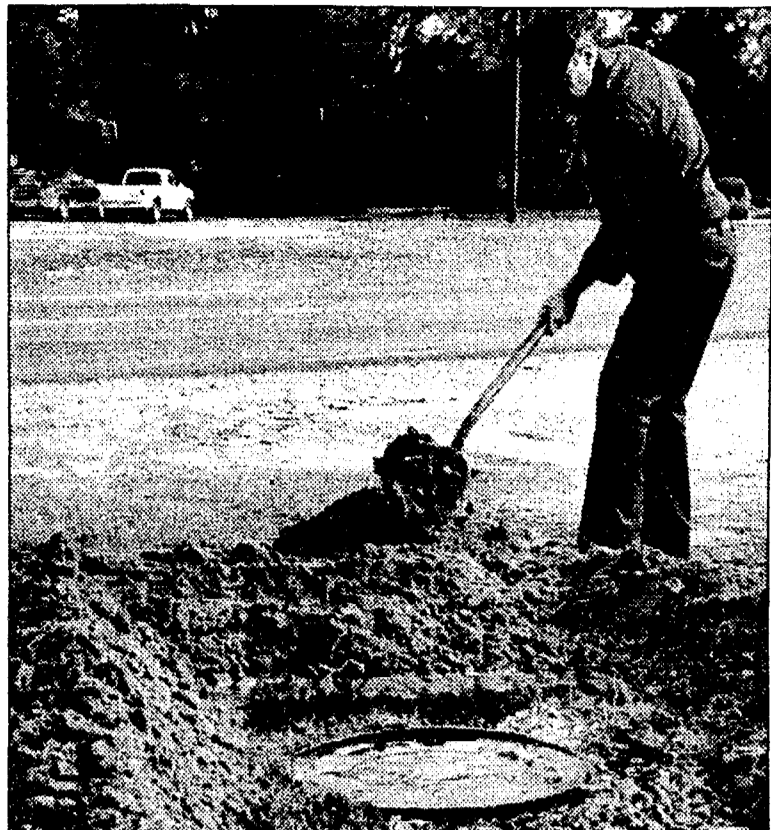


## Sewage stop



STAFF PHOTO BY GENE TYREE

Ray Dove, owner of Ray's Performance Service Center in Lumberton, tries to stop sewage from flowing out of a manhole and onto his business property Wednesday.

## County, city leaders seek safer community, money

DONNIE BYERS

STAFF WRITER

LUMBERTON — The creation of a safer community and a chance at federal dollars brought 25 city and county leaders together at Parkview Activity Center Wednesday.

The officials met behind closed doors and discussed ways to reduce crime in southeast Lumberton, with a goal of winning a federal "Weed & Seed" community designation for the area.

The designation is prestigious and could lead to \$125,000 in federal grants for southeast Lumberton, said Millicent Strickland, the project's coordinator. The money would include an \$80,000 grant for law enforcement programs and community policing, and \$40,000 to open a community center, or safe haven, for residents.

"The overall goal is to eliminate crime and to create a safer environ-

ment," Strickland said.

To win the designation, the southeast Lumberton community must show the U.S. Department of Justice what it already is doing to fight crime and what it intends to do in the future.

The participants in Wednesday's meeting are part of a steering committee that will help submit southeast Lumberton's application to the Justice Department, which administers the program. They agreed to target drugs, prostitution and violent crime in southeast Lumberton because they feel those are the most pressing problems.

Police Chief Randall Aragon said the answer could be increased foot patrols in the area, vigorous prosecution of criminals and eliminating drug houses.

The steering committee will hold a public hearing on Oct. 12 at Parkview to receive public input before submitting its application in November.

# U.S. authorities claim Mexican drug cartel has been dismantled

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal and local drug-enforcement officers have arrested 93 suspects in a sweeping crackdown that one official said Wednesday had dismantled "from top to bottom" the operations of notorious late drug trafficker Amado Carrillo Fuentes.

The arrests over the past 18 months in Raleigh, N.C., and other cities resulted from an investigation into one of the largest drug cartels in Mexico. The cartel is believed to have funneled tons of Colombian cocaine through Mexico into major U.S. cities, including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Miami, Atlanta, Philadelphia and Houston, and from there throughout the country.

The investigation, dubbed "Operation Impunity," targeted alleged "cell heads" running the drug operation after the death of Carrillo, who was known as the "Lord of the Skies" because of his use of large aircraft to transport drugs. Carrillo was considered Mexico's No. 1 drug lord until he died in July 1997 while recovering from plastic surgery designed to help him evade law enforcement.

"We have substantially hindered their ability to move cocaine and other drugs into, and around, this country," said Attorney General Janet Reno.

"It means we have taken another step forward in making our streets safer," she said.

While authorities were careful to point out that drug players and operations are usually replaced, Donnie Marshall, acting administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, said: "We effectively dismantled this operation from top to bottom ... right down to their local distribution networks."

"This operation was undertaken to prove that traffickers in Mexico and the United States no longer operate with impunity," Marshall said.

The investigation was conducted by the DEA along with the FBI and the U.S. Customs Service and scores of local police departments around the country.

It also had the cooperation of the Mexican government, a stark contrast to last year when Mexican officials were incensed at a U.S. sting operation that snared some 160 people suspected of laundering drug profits.

## Nucor's plan leaves insiders doubtful

HAMMOND, Ind. (AP) — A top Nucor Corp. executive says the company is eyeing the Chicago area for a new mill, but steel analysts and labor leaders have their doubts.

Mike Parrish, executive vice president of the nation's largest nonunion steel producer, said it is interested in building a mill near Chicago-area steel users, most likely in Illinois, Indiana or Kentucky.

Northwest Indiana, despite its history of strong support for unions, "could be an option," Parrish said.

Charlotte, N.C.-based Nucor

expects to decide on whether to build a Midwest bar mill by year's end, with the location to be decided later, Parrish said. The mill would employ about 350 workers and cost \$150 million to \$250 million to build.

Parrish acknowledged northwest Indiana's union-friendly reputation could push Nucor somewhere else. None of the Nucor's other mills, including one in Crawfordsville and two north of Fort Wayne, have even experienced unionizing efforts.

"It's very preliminary," Parrish said. "We don't know where it's going to go right

now."

Industry insiders doubt a nonunion bar mill could survive in the Chicago area.

"I wouldn't put much stock in it," said Waldo Best, a steel analyst for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, pointing to a surplus in the bar market and the high costs of utilities near urban centers. "It doesn't make a lot of sense to me."

Nucor's three existing nonunion plants in Indiana cater to completely different markets than the proposed plant, Parrish said. The company has eight other bar mills, mostly in the

South and Southeast, producing beams, flat steel and long products.

The proposed plant would produce angles, rounds and small beams used almost entirely in the fields of construction and heavy industry.

A mill near Chicago would run counter to Nucor's history of building in rural areas where cheap power and nonunion labor are plentiful.

Best said if the plant was built too close to Chicago, Nucor won't get the cheap power rates it typically seeks.

## Relative of 4-year-old reports abuse by mother

FAIRMONT — A relative of a 4-year-old boy reported to sheriff's deputies that the child was abused by his mother on Tuesday.

According to the report, the child was beaten on the legs with a switch, causing him to bleed. The boy was taken to Southeastern Regional Medical Center and treated for minor injuries, according to the report.

The report said that in past weeks, the mother's boyfriend had beaten the child across the back with a belt.



The case is under investigation. **Woman reports rape by former boyfriend**

PEMBROKE — A 21-year-old woman reported to sheriff's

deputies that she was raped by her former boyfriend early Tuesday.

The woman said that she broke up with the man and that he then raped her in her home at about 2:30 a.m.

**Sheriff's detectives seeking public's help**

LUMBERTON — Sheriff's detectives are seeking the public's help in locating an air compressor that was stolen last weekend.

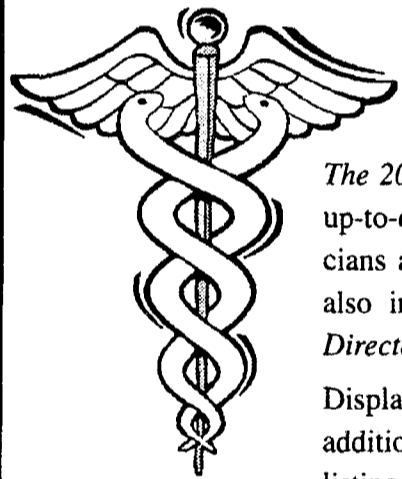
The gasoline-powered air compressor, valued at \$1,500, was taken off the back of a service truck at Lloyd Meekins & Sons Auction Company sometime between 8 p.m. Friday and 8 a.m. Saturday, according to Detective Sgt. Donnie Britt.

A security fence was cut to enter the property, which is located at 4070 N.C. 211 East.

Anyone with information is asked to call Britt at 671-3179. All information will be kept confidential.

## 2000 HEALTH CARE DIRECTORY

### ROBESON COUNTY'S GUIDE TO HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS



The 2000 Health Care Directory provides area residents with an up-to-date listing of area health care providers, from family physicians and hospitals to dentists and home health services. It will also include special features on important health issues. The Directory will reach more than 40,000 readers in Robeson County.

Display advertising is available throughout the publication. In addition, business purchasing a display ad will receive a Directory listing free.

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