

# OPIOIDS

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Thankfully, there's a drug, naloxone that can reverse opioid overdoses and restore breathing - and at a community meeting in Cave Junction May 30, 7-9 p.m. at the County Building, 102 S. Redwood Hwy, this drug will be made available to attendees.

"An overdose doesn't have to be fatal," explained meeting organizer Julia Pinsky. "Naloxone is not addictive and is very safe. Anyone can use it and anyone can carry it. If you're worried that someone in your life might be at risk, come to the meeting. We're not about prying into anyone's business, whether you are the grandparent of someone who uses illicit drugs, or you use them yourself, we don't care. There's no judging - we just want to get naloxone into your hands."

Pinsky and her husband, David Pinsky, lost their son, Max, to a heroin overdose in 2013, after he'd struggled

with addiction for some time. As parents they wanted to spare others this terrible loss, so they formed Max's Mission, a nonprofit organization that works to save lives in Southern Oregon that might otherwise be lost to opioid overdose. The Pinskys use this platform to spread awareness and offer training and free distribution of naloxone.

"The avalanche of addiction in a family is so overwhelming. Those affected frequently feel alienated from others and often think that nobody else could imagine what they're going through," Pinsky said. "Yet opioid addiction goes far beyond 'kids in the streets' to permeate all avenues of society - and there can be a negative stigma. Many people are very secretive about a partner, child or aunt on opioids. But you're never that far away from somebody who is using these drugs. We hope to broaden the conversation in communities and help address issues related to prescription and illicit opioid use to help save lives of friends, families and neighbors."

Pinsky said "the proof is in the numbers" - that when naloxone is distributed, overdose numbers "go way down." She said Multnomah County has tracked this positive trend.

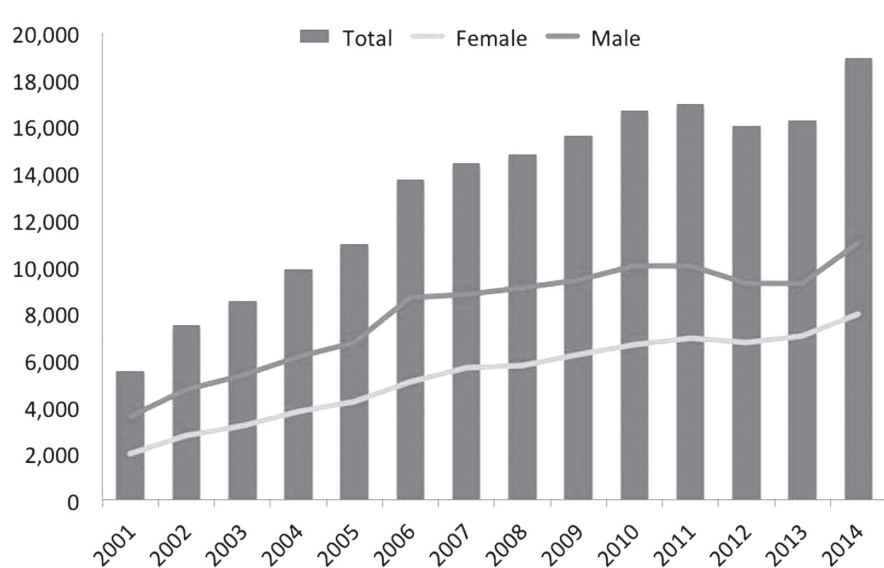
Opioid addiction catches many people off guard. Pinsky explained: "What often happens is they have their wisdom teeth out, or they have an accident and they get prescription opioids. They like it and become addicted, and many of these people end up on street or illicit drugs. Opioids quickly change the brain and the personality. The brain becomes focused on where the next fix is going to come from and often shuts down normal daily activities of life. Then people need help - it's very hard to come off opioids by themselves."

At the upcoming meeting some free doses of naloxone will be available. The meeting will also provide training on how and when to use naloxone and how to get the drug from your local pharmacy (changes in Oregon law now enable the public to purchase naloxone without



## National Overdose Deaths

Number of Deaths from Prescription Opioid Pain Relievers



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, CDC Wonder

a prescription). While the drug can be expensive, patients at local clinics can usually get it either free or very reasonably priced - and Oregon Health Plan covers naloxone, according to Pinsky. Contacts, resources and information to help battle opioid addiction will also be offered at the meeting.

"If you are worried that someone in your life

might be at risk, please come to the meeting," Pinsky said.

The naloxone has been made available by funding from the Oregon Attorney General, and the Pinskys' work is also supported by Oregon Pain Guidance, HIV Alliance, Siskiyou Community Health Center and IVcanDO.

While currently busy

organizing community meetings in Southern Oregon, the Pinskys are also seeking additional funding to extend their reach. They're working with Dr. Jim Shames, who helped start the Siskiyou Community Health Center and now serves as Jackson County's medical director.

Learn more about the Pinskys' work at [www.maxmission.org](http://www.maxmission.org).

# SPACE ...

Continued from A-1

to increase Josephine County's ability to attract employers, land must be acquired, and if need be developed, to be suitable for businesses small and large alike.

Schmelzer said during an administrative meeting with the commissioners that it is not unusual for a governmental entity to pursue and develop industrial areas; this is especially true if the private sector fails to do so.

Although there is 710 acres of vacant industrial land in Josephine County, the majority is currently either not for sale or lacks important services such as sewer or water. Why a great deal of the county's land is

"not for sale" Schmelzer could not decisively say but theorized that private individuals are holding onto the land in the hopes that its value may increase, because they need a "write off," or simply because they aren't ready to sell it yet.

Josephine County has desirable industrial land located in the Illinois Valley Industrial Park, at the airport, but it is currently flawed because the fire suppression system must be fixed before the county can market it to businesses. The funding required, which would come out of the lottery-dollar-fueled Economic Development Fund if approved, is currently estimated at around \$50,000.

Schmelzer, though admittedly optimistic, estimates that there's about a 75 percent chance of the project being approved. The

funding will be approved or disapproved over the coming months of spring as the budgeting process is completed.

In addition to the funds requested for the Illinois Valley Industrial Park's fire suppression system, there has also been a request to set aside money to build a brand-new "I-5 industrial park." However, this project is still in the very early stages of development and nothing about it, even its size or location, is confirmed.

Despite many businesses preferring industrial parks for guaranteed land use compatibility, services and close proximity to major transport routes, industrial land that does not have any or all of these qualities should still, according to Schmelzer, be developed if possible. Schmelzer continued on the point

by saying that smaller, local, operations that do not have "intense uses" could easily make use of service workarounds like private septic systems.

The State of Oregon can help to market industrial sites globally through the state's Certified Shovel Ready program but, according to Schmelzer, Josephine County currently does not have any sites that qualify.

"If we are going to attract traded sector employers—which pay higher wages—we need available land; closer to I-5, rail or airports; with an accessible workforce; and it needs to be shovel-ready if we want to have an advantage over other areas in the state," Schmelzer concluded.

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