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Dale Moss | Lori Croasdell leads war on drugs in Scott County

Seventeen dead this year.



Lori Croasdell uses that shameful number like a club. And why not?

Otherwise, Scott County will not learn about an epidemic of prescription-drug abuse.

Croasdell, chairwoman of the Coalition to Eliminate the Abuse of Substances (CEASe), has her work cut out for her. And the county desperately needs to hear Croasdell's message. "If we weren't doing anything, I can't help but think how much worse things might be," she said.

Croasdell, 48, is a physician's wife, mother and someone for whom this scourge has hit close to home.

"It ignited my passion," she said.

When Croasdell agreed to lead the coalition, she made sure to have followers such as Danny Jackson, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Scottsburg. "We're all willing to try, all willing to work together," Jackson said. "That's the good thing.

"We're starting to make a step or two we'd not made before."

Jackson will lead the coalition when Croasdell steps next month into a part-time coordinator's role.

For \$300 per month, Croasdell is obliged to put in 20 hours. But in that amount of time, she'll just be getting warmed up.

"She's so enthusiastic herself, she expects everybody else to be," said Carolyn King, another coalition member.

With school leaders, a judge or two, social workers and other pastors, Croasdell has helped cobble together a coalition that is difficult — hopefully impossible — to ignore. Today, it will welcome a speaker from Florida, Karen Perry, who lost her son to prescription-drug abuse.

At the talk, it also will welcome relatives of the 17 mostly young adults in the county who died of prescription-drug abuse this year.